OLYMAN

AND

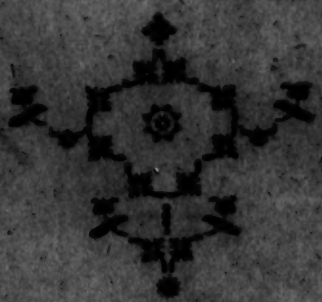
ALMENA.

AN

ORIENTAL TALE.

BY DR. LANGHORNE.

——LIBET PARTHO TORQUERE CYDONIA CORNU
EPICULA——— VIRG.



LONDON:

Printed for HARRISON and Co. No. 18, Paternoster-Row.

M DCC LXXX.

SOLYMAN

AND

ALMEIDA.

AN

ORIENTAL TALE.

TO THE

QUEEN.

MADAM,

TO the public teſtimonies of reſpect and duty offered to your MAJESTY on the happy occaſion of your nuptials, may an individual add his wiſhes for the long continuance of an union ſo auſpicious to your people?

Diſtinguiſhed by every amiable and elegant accompliſhment, your MAJESTY will not refuſe your royal favour to SOLYMAN

 and

ALMENA, ſince theſe characters are drawn, however imperfectly, in the cauſe of truth and virtue.

With all poſſible reſpect and duty,

I am, MADAM,

Your MAJESTY's

Moſt humble

And

Moſt faithful ſervant,

JOHN LANGHORNE.

SOLYMAN AND ALMENA.

CHAP. I.

LET the ſons and daughters of affliction receive comfort from hope. The motion of the ſunbeams on the wave, is not more uncertain, than the condition of human life: miſery, therefore, has much to hope, and happineſs much to fear; but virtue has always a reſource in Providence, which not only improves the bleſſings, but mitigates the evils of life.

In a pleaſant valley of Meſopotamia, on the banks of the Irwan, lived Solyman, the ſon of Ardavan the ſage. He was early inſtructed in all the learning of the eaſt; but as his underſtanding opened, he grew weary of the labours of ſtudy, and thirſted only for the knowledge of mankind. With much importunity, he prevailed on his father to permit him to travel. 'My ſon,' ſaid Ardavan, 'let not your curioſity interrupt your happineſs: all that nature can give you, is in the valley of Irwan: here you are cheriſhed by the eye of affection, and indulged with all the bounties of the eternal ſun. Travel is often dangerous, and always inconvenient: your knowledge of men may be purchaſed by experiencing their treachery, their cruelty, and their pride; the unſuſpecting innocence of your heart will expoſe you to the deſigns of the ſelfiſh, and the inſolence of the vain; you will wander from place to place, only for amuſement; as your heart can have no connections that time or intereſt have rendered dear to you, you will be little affected by any thing you ſee: and what is more than all, your virtue will be endangered; when you behold the univerſal prevalence of vice, when your eye is attracted by the flowery paths in which ſhe ſeems to tread, you will find it difficult to withſtand the force of example, and the blandiſhments of pleaſure.' Solyman humbled himſelf, and replied: 'Prince of the ſages that dwell between the rivers, let your ear be patient to the words of youth. Can Ardavan doubt the integrity of the heart, which his precepts have formed to virtue; or fear that Solyman ſhould become the ſlave of vice? I am not a ſtranger to the manners of men, though I have mixed but little among them; nor am I unacquainted with the temptations to which I ſhall be expoſed, nor unprepared to withſtand them. Travel may be attended with ſome inconveniences, but it has many advantages: next to the knowledge of ourſelves, moſt valuable is the knowledge of nature; and this is to be acquired, only by attending her through the variety of her works; the more we behold of theſe, the more our ideas are enlarged and extended; and the nobler and more worthy conceptions we muſt entertain of that Power, who is the parent of univerſal being.'

'My ſon,' ſaid Ardavan, 'if you are determined to travel, let your

'ear attend to the inſtruction of age. 'Move not one pace from the valley 'of Irwan, if your heart rely not on the 'Eternal Providence; it is that con'fidence alone which muſt ſupport you 'under all the poſſible contingencies 'of diſtreſs: O let it not depart from 'you; it is the ſovereign antidote to 'the evils of life! The day is not 'lighted up in vain, let it not paſs 'without the practice of virtue; dare 'not to behold the everlaſting ſun go 'down, if thou haſt waſted his light 'in idleneſs or in vanity: ignorance, 'miſery, or want, will always afford 'thee the means of beneficence.

'May that Immortal Being, whoſe 'eye is over all his creatures, ſave thee 'from folly and from vice! may his 'hand direct thee in the hour of negli'gence, and his ſpirit guide thee 'through the maze of error! When 'thy mind ſhall be enriched with the 'knowledge of his works, may he re'ſtore thee, more virtuous, to the val'ley of Irwan, to the arms of thy aged 'father! and may he forgive this tear, 'which proceeds not from a diſtruſt of 'his Providence, but falls for the loſs 'of Solyman!'

CHAP. II.

THE morning was ſpread upon the mountains, and Solyman prepared to depart: but firſt proſtrating himſelf towards the ſun, he thus addreſſed that glorious luminary. 'Incompa'rable, and everlaſting! thou, that 'lighteſt up a thouſand worlds, and 'extendeſt thy protecting power to the 'minuteſt parts of nature! let thy uni'verſal eye look with favour upon So'lyman. When I wander over the 'waſtes of deſolation, may thy chear'ful rays comfort and ſupport me! 'when I go into the cities of men, 'mayeſt thou ſtill look upon me; teach 'me to diſcover the dark deſigns of 'malignity, and to unfold the intri'cacies of fraud! ſo mayeſt thou riſe 'with ſevenfold luſtre over the waves 'of Indus; ſo mayeſt thou be adored 'by thoſe ſavage nations, who expe'rience thy goodneſs without acknow'ledgment!' After this ſhort addreſs, he ſung the following hymn.

HYMN TO THE RISING SUN.

FROM the red wave riſing bright,
Lift on high thy golden head;
O'er the miſty mountain, ſpread
Thy ſmiling rays of orient light!

See the golden god appear!
Flies the fiend of darkneſs drear;
Flies, and in her gloomy train,
Sable grief, and care, and pain!

See the golden god advance!
On Taurus' heights his courſers prance:
With him haſte the vernal hours,
Breathing ſweets, and dropping flowers.

Laughing ſummer at his ſide,
Waves her locks in roſy pride;
And autumn bland, with aſpect kind,
Bears his golden ſheaf behind.

O haſte, and ſpread the purple day
O'er all the wide ethereal way!
Nature mourns at thy delay:
God of glory, haſte away!

From the red wave riſing bright,
Lift on high thy golden head;
O'er the miſty mountain, ſpread
Thy ſmiling rays of orient light!

When Solyman had finiſhed his devotions, he paſſed over the Tigris into the kingdom of Perſia.

There is ſome ſecret attraction in the place where we have paſſed the chearful innocence of childhood, that holds our heart to it during the remaining part of life. No ſooner had Solyman aſcended an eminence that gave him a retroſpective view of the valley of Irwan, than he turned his eye on his native fields, and gazed for ſome time with a kind of penſive complacency. 'Happy 'ſcenes,' ſaid he, 'where I have be'held the everlaſting ſun ſo often riſe 'and ſet! yonder is the grove, where 'I repoſed at noon; and that is the 'hill, where I muſed at eve. In yon 'manſion, I firſt drew the breath of 'heaven; and there, perhaps, Ardavan 'may yet be weeping for my departure.'

The gentle heart of Solyman thus indulged itſelf a while, till the declining day called upon him to proceed.

CHAP. III.

WHEN he had reached the foot of Taurus, the ſhadows of evening fell from the mountains; he, therefore,

therefore, ſought to repoſe himſelf in the village of Abdat: but as he was advancing towards it, he was ſtopped by an exclamation of ſorrow, that proceeded from an adjacent wood. As he was in hopes of relieving ſome diſtreſs, he ſcrupled not to draw near enough to liſten; and ſoon diſcovered, that the perſons he heard ſpeaking, were two lovers, who had ſtolen a ſecret interview before their final ſeparation.

The heart of Solyman had never felt the paſſion of love; and he was, therefore, the more curious to ſee the effects of it. But how great was his aſtoniſhment, when, as he approached the place from whence the voices came, he beheld the lover lying, in all the agonies of ſorrow, at the feet of his weeping miſtreſs! 'Immortal Power,' ſaid he, 'I have been told, that love 'was the beſt of thy gifts: is this 'miſerable, this painful ſight, a proof 'of it? behold that wretched youth, 'how his heart labours and ſtruggles 'under it's oppreſſion; while the ami-'able maiden, who ſeems to be the 'cauſe of his miſery, hangs over him 'in tears and ſilence, as if incapable 'of relieving him! Heavens, what 'agonies! reaſon will be driven from 'her ſeat. Ha! nature gives place; 'he faints!'

Solyman perceiving his aſſiſtance was now become neceſſary, ruſhed into the thicket, and raiſed the unhappy lover from the earth. At length his ſenſes returned; but his grief, which had before been ſo exquiſitely violent, was changed into gloomy ſtupidity. Solyman, however, by the ſoothing ſounds of pity, awoke his attention, and by gentle importunity drew from him the cauſe of his diſtreſs.

'Stranger,' ſaid the youth, 'who-'ever thou art, thine appearance en-'titles thee to regard, and the com-'paſſion thou haſt ſhewn me merits 'my confidence. Thou now beholdeſt 'the moſt unhappy of men. That la-'dy, at whoſe feet I ſo lately lay in-'ſenſible, is the daughter of a mercee-'nary wretch, who has ſold her to the 'Khan of Bukharia; and to-morrow 'ſhe is to be conveyed to him, without 'expoſtulation or reprieve.'

'What,' replied Solyman, 'is it 'poſſible, that any thing can induce a 'parent to make his child miſerable! 'I was not ignorant of the depravity 'of man; but I thought the affections 'of nature could not have been over-'come. Yet if it is ſo, can there be 'any obligation on the child, to take 'the portion of miſery that her parent 'holds out to her? The obligation of 'children to parents, can only be 'founded in gratitude; and where no 'favour is ſhewn, no gratitude can be 'due. It is impoſſible that, in any 'circumſtances, you ſhould be more 'miſerable; but it is very poſſible, 'that you may be happier. Fly, while 'the moments of liberty remain: and 'let not thoſe hearts which Heaven has 'formed for each other, be ſeparated 'by man. The roof of Ardavan has 'always been a refuge to innocence in 'diſtreſs: I will myſelf conduct you 'to the valley of Irwan, where my fa-'ther's venerable character, and the 'retired ſituation of his abode, will 'ſecure you from detection; and I 'ſhall rejoice to be the means of de-'livering you from miſery.'

This offer was too intereſting to be refuſed. The lovers put themſelves under the conduct of Solyman; and he now repaſſed the roads he had travelled by the light of the ſun, with ſuperior pleaſure even in the gloom of night; ſo delightful is beneficence to a virtuous mind!

When the morning began to appear, they had reached the banks of the Tigris. 'It will not be neceſſary,' ſaid Solyman, 'that I ſhould attend you 'farther: yonder is the valley of Ir-'wan, and the houſe of Ardavan. To 'know that you are unhappy, will be 'a ſufficient motive for him to receive 'you; and your ſtory will procure you 'his protection. I will now take leave 'of you, becauſe I would not again 'take leave of my father. Tell him, 'that I recommend you to his care; 'he will rejoice to hear, that Solyman 'has been the means of your happi-'neſs: but tell him not, that I return-'ed to the banks of the Tigris.' Having thus parted with the lovers, he proceeded on his journey, and in five days arrived at Iſpahan.

The beauty and magnificence of that extenſive city, engaged his attention for many days: he was now aſtoniſhed at the ſtupendous effects of induſtry, and now delighted by the elegance of art. But by theſe, he thought himſelf rather amuſed than inſtructed; and he perceived

perceived that day after day departed from him, without being diſtinguiſhed either by the acquiſition of knowledge, or the practice of virtue; he, therefore, frequented the places of public reſort, and endeavoured to form ſuch connections as were moſt likely to promote both.

CHAP. IV.

AMONG thoſe whoſe converſation he found moſt inſtructive and entertaining, he was particularly fond of an Engliſh merchant, who had reſided ſome time at Iſpahan, and ſpoke the language of the country: the merchant alſo perceiving in Solyman a ſuperior underſtanding, and a benevolent heart, was delighted with his company, and cultivated his friendſhip. They frequently met; and their converſation generally turning on the manners and purſuits of men, they mutually gratified each other by accounts of their different countries.

'You,' ſaid Solyman, 'have enjoyed the advantages which I am ſtill 'to procure. You have ſeen many 'different parts of the world, and can 'form a collective idea of it's inhabitants: your commercial engagements 'muſt have led you much into the intereſts and deſigns of men; and you 'muſt, conſequently, be well acquainted with the prevailing propenſities of 'the heart. But I ſhould be particularly 'obliged to you for an account of your 'own country, of which I have yet had 'but an imperfect deſcription.'

'The difference of men,' ſaid the merchant, 'lies only in their complexion and manners: their principles are the ſame, in all ages, and 'in all climates; and ſelf-intereſt is the 'prevailing principle, from Indus to 'the Thames. I am not, however, 'ſuch a ſchool philoſopher, as to think 'that the whole human ſpecies ſhould 'come under this concluſion: I have 'experienced the delights of friendſhip, 'and the conſolations of benevolence, 'where intereſt was no motive; I have 'even known many, who have contributed to remove the miſeries of their 'fellow creatures, though by the diminution of their own fortune. That 'excellent, that truly uſeful ſpirit of 'munificence, in a particular manner 'characterizes my countrymen. Were 'you, my friend, in the metropolis 'of Great Britain, you would behold ſpacious edifices erected for 'helpleſs indigence; and find the ſame 'ſkill and care employed for the health 'and the lives of the poor, that the 'moſt affluent circumſtances can procure for the rich.

'But munificence is not the only 'ornament that diſtinguiſhes my country: there too dwell liberty and juſtice; liberty, that, however ſtrange it 'may ſeem to you, delights in the protection of a monarch; and juſtice, 'which he cauſes to be adminiſtered 'without partiality. The greateſt baſſa 'in Great Britain cannot invade either 'the life or the property of the meaneſt ſubject with impunity; he is 'equally obnoxious to the laws, and 'would ſuffer indiſcriminately with 'the moſt obſcure malefactor.

'This general ſecurity of property 'and life, excites an unwearied ſpirit 'of induſtry, and diſperſes the ſons of 'commerce over the remoteſt regions 'of the earth. Hence, my friend, we 'viſit the towers of Iſpahan, and the 'gulphs of Baſſora; our ſails are 'ſtretched from the moſt diſtant iſlands 'of the Atlantic, to the ſhores of Japan: and London is ſupplied with 'all the luxuries of nature, and all 'the labours of art.'

'You give me,' ſaid Solyman, 'a 'very magnificent, and a very pleaſing 'idea of your country. But will not 'commerce, as it enriches the people, 'corrupt their manners? Will unbounded affluence produce neither 'riot nor debauchery, vanity nor pride? 'The inhabitants of Great Britain 'may be more ſplendid and luxurious; 'but the dwellers in Meſopotamia are, 'perhaps, happier, in proportion as 'they are more innocent: for Ardavan, my father, has frequently told 'me, that wealth corrupts the heart of 'man.'

'All the good things of life,' anſwered the merchant, 'are compli'cated with evils. If wealth be not 'deſirable, becauſe it may lead us into 'luxury, or inflame us with pride; no 'more would the ſanguine chearfulneſs 'of health, leſt it ſhould betray us into licentiouſneſs. There are, it is 'to be feared, many, whoſe manners 'are depraved by riches; but there

'are,

'are, likewiſe, many, who employ 'them in the diffuſion of knowledge, 'or the relief of indigence.'

'Theſe,' ſaid Solyman, 'are glo-'rious ends; and would almoſt excite 'me to turn merchant, for the acqui-'ſition of wealth. But give me ſome 'account of the literature of your 'country.'

'Of that,' replied the merchant, 'I 'am ſcarce a competent judge, the 'greateſt part of my time having been 'employed in commercial ſtudies. I 'am not, however, wholly unacquaint-'ed with it; for I have always thought, 'that a merchant ſhould not neglect 'the accompliſhments of a gentleman. 'The preſent ſtate of literature in 'Great Britain, will be beſt ſeen, by 'conſidering the performances of the 'learned in their reſpective claſſes. 'We have but few hiſtorians of real 'merit; either their ſtyle is ſlovenly 'and unharmonious, or their matter 'undigeſted and confuſed; they are 'either the tools of a faction, or the 'ſlaves of a bookſeller. But I have 'had the pleaſure of hearing, ſince I 'came to Iſpahan, that the hiſtories of 'England and Scotland, the two di-'viſions of Great Britain, have lately 'been written with conſiderable ſpirit, 'accuracy, and elegance. As to the 'hiſtories of other countries, which 'have been publiſhed in Great Britain, 'they are ſuch mere compilations, 'that they deſerve not to be called the 'labours of art.'

'From this account of your hiſto-'rians,' ſaid Solyman, 'I cannot en-'tertain any great idea of them; but 'what are your orators?'—'As to 'rhetorical writings,' anſwered the merchant, 'we have many that are 'truly excellent; ſpirited and elevated 'in ſentiment, in language harmonious 'and correct: but the powers of com-'poſition are rendered inefficacious by 'a ſpiritleſs pronunciation. The art 'of public ſpeaking, however impor-'tant in itſelf, ſeems entirely to be 'neglected; and the orator pronounces 'his diſcourſe from the roſtrum, with 'as little feeling himſelf, and as little 'influence upon his audience, as if he 'were reading the newſpaper of the 'day.'—'Then, I ſuppoſe,' ſaid So-lyman, 'that your orators ſpeak on 'unaffecting, or unintereſting ſub-'jects.'—'That is not the caſe,' re-plied the merchant; 'the ſubjects they 'treat are of the laſt importance: the 'duties we owe the Supreme Being, 'the diſpenſations of his providence, 'the eternal obligations of morality, 'the charms of virtue, and the de-'lightful exerciſes of juſtice, mercy, 'and charity.'—'Holy Mithra!' in-terrupted Solyman, 'can the ſpeakers 'be unaffected, while they are treating 'theſe ſubjects? Do they then think 'them of that importance they really 'are; or do your teachers diſbelieve and 'diſregard their own doctrines; or are 'they unconcerned what effect they may 'have upon the people?'—'It would 'be uncharitable,' ſaid the merchant, 'to admit generally any of theſe ſup-'poſitions. Their unanimated and 'unawakening manner of ſpeaking, 'may proceed from innocent cauſes, 'which thoſe you mention are not.'

'I take it for granted,' ſaid Soly-man, 'that as you have orators, at 'leaſt in point of compoſition, you have 'alſo poets; for rhetoric and poetry 'are nearly allied. Beſides, I have 'been informed, that every country 'has it's poets; and that even on the 'frozen mountains of the north, the 'hardy inhabitants open their mouths 'to ſing.'—'The love of harmony,' replied the merchant, 'is in man a 'natural paſſion. There is ſomething 'metrical and numerous in his mo-'tions, his actions, and his words; 'and he has always endeavoured to 'reduce the laſt to a kind of poetical 'meaſure, even where the art of writ-'ing was unknown or unpractiſed. 'The art of poetry in Great Britain 'has of late years been brought to 'great perfection: the language of the 'country is both nervous and harmo-'nious, and calculated to expreſs the 'tender and the ſublime, in both which 'ſpecies of writing we have poets that 'have never been excelled. Though 'the Engliſh are, in general, of a leſs 'ſprightly turn, than their neighbours 'the French; yet, in the active powers 'of imagination, in the flights of fan-'cy, and the ſtrains of humour, their 'writings are by no means inferior. 'Hence, the Engliſh poetry is not only 'harmonious, but ſentimental and 'pictureſque, abounding with ſtrong 'images and lively deſcription. In

'ſhort,

'short, my countrymen have attempted 'every different ſpecies of poetry, and 'have excelled in each.'

'The account you give me of your 'poetry,' ſaid Solyman, 'makes me 'very deſirous to learn your language. 'There is no ſpecies of writing that 'gives me equal pleaſure: I caught 'the enthuſiaſm from nature, from the 'harmony and ſymmetry of her works. 'If you, who have ſo long been ac-'cuſtomed to the elegance of the En-'gliſh, can bear a ſpecimen of the Me-'ſopotamian poetry, I will repeat to 'you a performance of my own.'

A FAREWEL HYMN TO THE VALLEY OF IRWAN.

FAREWEL the fields of Irwan's vale,
My infant years where fancy led;
And ſooth'd me with the weſtern gale,
Her wild dreams waving round my head;
While the blythe blackbird told his tale.
Farewel, the fields of Irwan's vale!

The primroſe on the valley's ſide,
The green thyme on the mountain's head,
The wanton roſe, the daiſy pied,
The wilding's bloſſom bluſhing red:
No longer I their ſweets inhale.
Farewel, the fields of Irwan's vale!

How oft, within yon vacant ſhade,
Has ev'ning cloſ'd my careleſs eye!
How oft, along thoſe banks, I've ſtray'd,
And watch'd the wave that wander'd by!
Full long their loſs ſhall I bewail.
Farewel, the fields of Irwan's vale!

Yet ſtill within yon vacant grove,
To mark the cloſe of parting day;
Along yon flow'ry banks to rove,
And watch the wave that winds away;
Fair fancy ſure ſhall never fail,
Though far from theſe, and Irwan's vale!

CHAP. V.

IN this ſocial intercourſe the merchant paſſed many days with Solyman, and while he gratified his curioſity engaged his affections. Being ſuddenly called by buſineſs to the court of Baſſora, he came one morning to take a final leave: but the traveller was too much attached to his friend, to ſuffer any thing but neceſſity to part them. 'Permit me,' ſaid he, 'to attend you 'on your preſent expedition. I have 'not appointed to myſelf any parti-'cular rout, but travel as occaſion or 'inclination leads me; and I am ſen-'ſible I ſhall gain more from your ex-'perience and obſervation, than I can 'from my own.' This offer was too agreeable to the merchant, not to be eagerly embraced; and after the neceſſary preparations, they ſet out from Iſpahan, and met the morning on the mountains of Arvan.

The ſun appeared above the horizon, and Solyman proſtrated himſelf in the profoundeſt adoration. When he aroſe from his devotions, he advanced towards his fellow traveller, with a look of kindneſs mixed with pity and concern. The merchant underſtood him: but as he was unwilling to controvert the principles of his religion, he made no apology for his conduct during the devotions of Solyman.

The mild morning light which was diffuſed over the vallies and ſtreams, the various beauty of the meadows, the regular diſpoſition of bloſſomed hedgerows, the ſoothing murmur of bees at their early labour, and the full concert of the feathered creation, drew their converſation on the univerſal beneficence of nature. 'I feel,' ſaid Solyman, 'a delight, which I can neither 'account for nor deſcribe. Theſe 'mountains gilded with the rays of 'the orient ſun, thoſe painted vallies 'that ſhame the rich carpets of Perſia, 'yon diſtant waters which gleam with 'the ſhifting effulgence of light, the 'general buſy voice of joy and activity 'in the animal creation, conſpire to fill 'my heart with inexpreſſible pleaſure.'

'That pleaſure,' replied the merchant, 'I believe proceeds from ſym-'pathy: it is ſcarce poſſible, unleſs 'you have ſome peculiar cauſe of mi-'ſery, not to be pleaſed when you ſee 'every thing around you happy. On 'the contrary, if you go into the man-'ſions of ſorrow, it will be impoſſible 'to withſtand the infection of it. The 'God of nature ſeems to have given 'us theſe ſympathetic feelings, to link 'our affections in the great chain of 'ſociety: hence, ſocial virtue is not 'left to depend ſolely on the moral 'will, but is founded on the princi-'ples of our nature.

'But the object of your adoration 'is ſo profuſe of his favours, that I 'ſhould now be glad to find ſome con-'venient ſhade. I think, I diſcover a

cave

'cave on the southern declivity of the 'mountain; let us retire to it, during 'the heat of the day.'

As they were advancing towards the cave, they perceived a beaten path leading directly from it to a distant rivulet; this made them apprehensive that it might be the habitation of some wild beast, that had worn the path by constantly going to drink at the stream: but their fears were soon removed upon the appearance of an aged hermit, advancing slowly towards the rivulet with an earthen pitcher. At sight of the travellers, he hasted to his abode with all the feeble precipitancy of age: they agreed not to disturb him, and only took the advantage of the rock which projected over his cell to shelter themselves from the sun; but they had not long continued in this situation, before the hermit, perceiving them to be inoffensive travellers, invited them into his cave.

'You will excuse,' said the hoary sage, 'the caution of years: these 'mountains are not secure from the 'ravage of human ferocity; and these 'grey hairs would be no defence from 'the wanton cruelty of man. I have 'suffered so much from my own species, that I have at last forsaken their 'society: I thought it better to give up 'the conveniences of it, than to bear 'the evils; and I have long lived in 'this solitary cave, on nothing more 'than what uncultivated nature would 'afford me.'—'Those sufferings,' said Solyman, 'must, indeed, have been extraordinary, that could make you 'give up one of the greatest advantages of life, the social intercourse of 'your fellow creatures.'—'The narratives of age,' replied the hermit, 'are seldom agreeable to youth; but 'as instruction can be gained only 'from experience, you will do wisely 'to learn it from the misfortunes of 'Abbas.

'I was born to a competent fortune 'in the province of Lurestan: but being early left an orphan, my affairs 'came under the cognizance of a justiciary court, which the members of 'it call the court of equity; but so 'equitable were they with regard to 'me, that they claimed two parts of 'my little fortune for their care of the 'third.'—'Would to God, that were 'never the case in Great Britain!' interrupted the merchant. 'But proceed.'—'Though I had such an early 'and convincing proof of the treachery 'and rapacity of mankind; yet, as I 'had always exercised the benevolent 'virtues myself, I could not think 'others totally devoid of them; and at 'my three and twentieth year being inclined to travel, I without scruple 'entrusted the remains of my fortune 'with a person whom I had long 'known and respected; a person, Holy 'Allah! who lifted his hands to thee: 'but I had not been absent from Lurestan more than three moons, when 'he pretended a commission to dispose 'of my effects, and immediately left 'the place. Upon my return therefore 'to the province, I found neither friend 'nor fortune; and being bred to no 'business, I was reduced to the most 'distressful state of indigence. I applied, however, not without hopes of 'redress or relief, to a person of power 'and eminence, whom I had often 'heard speak of his friendship with my 'father. After long and frequent attendance, I was admitted to an interview: I laid open my distress to 'him with that kind of eloquence 'which the miseries we suffer from the 'treachery of others always suggests; 'and which, however unaffecting it 'may be to indifferent persons, utters 'it's complaints with dignity and resentment. I was heard half way 'through my story, and dismissed with 'the following reply: "It is not ne"cessary, young man, to proceed with "your complaints; I perceive you "have been abused, and I am sorry "for you. But that shall not be the "only proof of my regard for you; "I will give you a little advice: you "should never depend so much on the "benevolence or integrity of any human being, as to trust him with your "fortune or your life." Thus ended 'my hopes from the friend of my father; whose benevolence extended no 'farther, than to instruct me how to 'secure the fortune that was stolen, 'and to preserve the life which I wished 'to lose.

'I had now no choice, but to enter, 'as a common soldier, into the army 'of the Sophi. I had always delighted in martial exercises, and was expert in the use of arms: my dexterity and address drew upon me the

'attention of my officers; and, in a 'short time, I obtained a small com-'miſſion. I had now almoſt forgot 'my miſeries, and embraced my new 'ſituation with chearfulneſs and hope; 'but fortune, who had for a while 'ceaſed to perſecute me as below her 'notice, as if ſhe had been indignant 'at my ſatisfaction, and jealous of my 'proſpects, now renewed and redoubled 'her ſeverity.

'My commanding officer had a 'daughter of extraordinary beauty, 'and an uncommon capacity. Zara 'was the object of univerſal admira-'tion; but ſhe had ſet her heart on the 'unfortunate Abbas. The firſt mo-'ment I beheld her, I diſcovered in 'her looks the moſt tender and affec-'tionate regard for me, which I im-'puted to her compaſſion for my mis-'fortunes; though at the ſame time I 'wiſhed, without knowing why, that 'it might proceed from another cauſe. 'She aſked me for the ſtory of my life; 'I told it in the plaineſt and moſt pa-'thetic manner; yet, when I had fi-'niſhed, ſhe deſired me to repeat it. 'From this moment I had done with 'peace: her infectious tenderneſs had 'ſuch an influence upon my heart, that 'I could think of nothing but Zara; 'without Zara I was miſerable. A 'thouſand times did I flatter myſelf, 'that there was ſomething more than 'mere compaſſion in her look and man-'ner; and not many days had paſſed, 'before I was convinced of the dear 'fatal truth from this letter:

"TO ABBAS.

"YOUR merit and your ſufferings "have a claim to ſomething "more than compaſſion: to eſpouſe "the cauſe of Abbas, is to diſcharge "a duty which virtue cannot diſpenſe "with. Meet me on the parade this "evening, and you ſhall know more "of the ſentiments of

"ZARA."

'The emotions I felt on the receipt 'of this letter, can only be conceived 'by thoſe, who, in the midſt of de-'ſpairing love, have beheld a gleam of 'hope. The tumult of my heart hur-'ried me to the place appointed, long 'before the time: I walked backward 'and forward in the utmoſt confuſion, 'totally regardleſs of every object a-'bout me; ſometimes raiſing my hands 'and eyes in the ſudden effuſions of 'tranſport, and ſometimes ſmiling with 'the complacency of delight.

'At length the day departed, and 'Zara came. My heart bounded at 'her ſight: I was unable to ſpeak, and 'threw myſelf at her feet. She was 'alarmed at my exceſſive earneſtneſs 'and confuſion; but commanding me 'to riſe, "Abbas," ſaid ſhe, "if your "confuſion proceeds from your modeſt "gratitude, reſtrain it, till you find "whether I am able to ſerve you; if "it ariſe from any other cauſe, I muſt "leave you this moment." I intreat-'ed ſhe would tell me, to what I was 'indebted for the happineſs of this in-'terview, and I would be calm and 'attentive. "My regard for your "merit, and my compaſſion for your "ſufferings," ſaid ſhe, "make me "wiſh to ſerve you. Tell me, Ab-"bas, can I aſſiſt you through the "intereſt of my father?" I faultered 'out my acknowledgments; telling 'her, that to her I muſt owe all my 'hopes of future happineſs.

'She left me immediately, without 'reply. The ſingularity of my beha-'viour on the parade before the com-'ing of Zara, had drawn upon me the 'attention of an officer who was ſe-'cretly her admirer, and who, either 'through curioſity or ſuſpicion, though 'unobſerved by me, had waited at a 'convenient diſtance to watch my mo-'tions. No ſooner did he perceive the 'approach of Zara, than as well to 'gratify his revenge, as to ingratiate 'himſelf with her father, he immedi-'ately told him of our interview.

CHAP. VI.

'ZARA, ignorant of what had 'paſſed, with her uſual free-'dom and good-nature, began to ex-'preſs her compaſſion for the misfor-'tunes of Abbas, talked of his merits, 'and wiſhed to ſee him preferred. The 'old general, who was naturally jea-'lous and impetuous, exclaimed, with 'a burſt of indignation, "Yes, I ſhall "prefer him!" Early the next morning 'he ſent me my diſcharge; and while 'I was gazing in ſtupid aſtoniſhment 'upon my general's letter, a youth,

'maſked,

'masked, brought me a small casket, 'with a letter from Zara, which, to 'the best of my remembrance, was 'as follows:

"TO ABBAS.

"BY some unlucky circumstance, "which I do not now under- "stand, instead of promoting you, I "have been the cause of your dismis- "sion. The bearer, who brings you "a small casket of jewels for your sup- "port, has my commands to conduct "you the shortest way over the moun- "tains: follow him immediately, lest "the rage of jealousy meditate new "persecutions. He wears a mask, that "he may not be taken notice of as one "of the general's domesticks: his at- "tachment to me, will make him faith- "ful to you. Time may bring about "happier events. Adieu, adieu!

"ZARA."

'In the anguish and confusion of my 'heart, I followed my guide, without 'knowing whither he was leading me, 'or what I was about to do. I vented 'my grief in broken ejaculations, 'frequently calling upon the name of 'Zara, but not once addressing myself 'to my attendant. By the evening of 'the second day, we had advanced 'forty miles southward from the pro- 'vince of Lurestan; when—how shall 'I relate the last horrid scene of my mi- 'series!—pardon me!—these aged eyes 'have yet a tear left, yet a tear for the 'memory of Zara!—we were attacked 'by a band of robbers. My guide 'was Zara! in her fright, she threw off 'her mask, and cried, "Zara." Love, 'rage, fear, and vengeance, gave me 'supernatural strength: three of the 'villains fell by my sabre; a fourth 'disarmed me; and the rest of the gang 'carried off Zara.'

At this crisis of his story, the spirits of the aged hermit were exhausted by their own violence; and it was some time before he could proceed.

'You have now,' continued he, 'heard the completion of my misfor- 'tunes. When I was recovered of the 'wounds I had received, I spent some 'months in a fruitless search of Zara: 'at last, despairing to gain any intel- 'ligence of her, I transmitted an ac- 'count of the affair to her father; not 'without hope, that his power, or his 'wealth, might be a means of finding 'her out, and redeeming her: but I 'was deceived; and had soon the mor- 'tification to hear, that the unnatural 'wretch exulted in our misfortunes, 'and uttered the most dreadful impre- 'cations on his only child.

'Deprived of hope, and dejected 'with melancholy, I could no longer 'bear the society of mankind; I there- 'fore betook myself to these solitary 'mountains, where this cell has been 'my habitation for years, that have 'passed away in unvaried sorrow; and 'where you are the first of human be- 'ings that have heard me tell my tale.'

CHAP VII.

SOLYMAN expatiated on the suf- ferings of Abbas with the most ten- der sensibility, and inveighed against the baseness of mankind with all the rage of honest resentment. 'Surely,' said he to the merchant, 'man is the 'vilest of all creatures! in proportion 'as he excels them in reason, he ex- 'ceeds them in the ability to do mis- 'chief; and being equally cruel, the 'mischief he does renders him more 'detestable. Sacred Mithra! why dost 'thou lend thy light to the villain and 'the tyrant? Were it not for the enjoy- 'ment of your company, my friend, I 'should have few inducements to go 'farther from the valley of Irwan; for 'possibly to see more of human life, is 'only to know more of it's crimes and 'miseries.'

'From the complicated distresses of 'one person,' replied the merchant, 'you draw a partial image of the life 'of man. But the day declines: let 'us hasten over these mountains, that 'we may repose at night in some vil- 'lage of the valley.' The travellers took leave of the hermit; and about the close of day arrived at the village of Arden.

At their entrance, they were met by a person of a plain dress, and a chear- ful countenance, who, without cere- mony, invited them, as travellers, to partake of his house and table that night. They accepted his invitation; and the merchant, addressing himself to Solyman, said, 'From the family

'of this man, you shall not only be convinced, that there is both happiness and virtue in human life; but you shall see also, how much the former depends upon the latter. I have been entertained by him, in travelling this way before: he is never more happy than when he has an opportunity of gratifying his benevolence. His inheritance being much lessened by the losses of his father, who was a merchant, he has but little wealth, except what arises from the industrious cultivation of a farm, which he purchased ten years ago with the chief part of his fortune; yet he is as liberal to the poor and the stranger, as if he had large possessions: his known hospitality and generosity, make his house the resort of the traveller and the indigent; and, after he has finished the labours of the day, he is always ready to entertain the one, and relieve the other; hence that serene and easy chearfulness, which you see in his countenance. In his family you behold the influence of a good example: his wife, whom he loves, and by whom he is beloved with the most cordial sincerity, goes hand in hand with him, not only through their mutual cares, but also in the exercises of benevolence. It is the principle of her œconomy, that domestick frugality is the support of liberality; and she dispenses her own and her husband's bounties, with that propriety and easy chearfulness, which double their value to the receiver. The children inherit the benevolence of their parents, and learn the exercise of it from their example. Bye and bye they will croud about your sofa, solicitous to serve you: you shall see them preventing your wants, and watching your requests, with a busy emulation which shall do you the most services.'

Solyman listened, with delight, to his description of the villager's family; and hasted, with the most ardent curiosity, to behold that virtue he so much admired. When he found that every thing exceeded the merchant's account, and his own expectation. 'It is enough,' said he, 'I am again reconciled to my own species. Notwithstanding the impression I received from the story of the unfortunate Abbas, virtue has yet her temples among men; but, surely, she is a villager, and her votaries are the inhabitants of the fields!' Full of these thoughts, and delighted with the family of his host, he retired to his chamber, and, before he slept, composed the following ode.

THE HAPPY VILLAGER.

VIRTUE dwells in Arden's vale:
There her hallow'd temples rise;
There her incense greets the skies,
Grateful as the morning gale!

There, with humble peace, and her,
Lives the happy villager;
There the golden smiles of morn
Brighter every field adorn;
There the sun's declining ray
Fairer paints the parting day:
There the woodlark louder sings,
Zephyr moves on softer wings,
Groves in greener honours rise,
Purer azure spreads the skies;
There the fountains clearer flow,
Flowers in brighter beauty blow;
For, with peace and virtue, there
Lives the happy villager!

Distant still from Arden's vale
Are the woes the bad bewail;
Distant fell remorse, and pain,
And phrenzy smiling o'er her chain!
Grief's quick pang, despair's dead groan,
Are in Arden's vale unknown:
For, with peace and virtue, there
Lives the happy villager!

In his hospitable cell,
Love, and truth, and freedom dwell;
And, with aspect mild and free,
The graceful nymph, simplicity.
Hail, ye liberal graces, hail!
Natives all of Arden's vale:
For, with peace and virtue, there
Lives the happy villager!

CHAP. VIII.

WHEN the dawn of the morning broke, Solyman and the merchant, with the most grateful acknowledgments of the hospitality with which they had been entertained, left the village of Arden, followed by the kind wishes of their host, and his amiable family. They travelled for some days through the southern provinces of Persia, without any remarkable occurrence, or any other entertainment, than such as could be found in the diversity of prospects,

proſpects, and the different labours of men. Sometimes they amuſed themſelves with the contemplation of thoſe places, which hiſtory had marked out, as the ſcenes of great events; and ſometimes had occaſion to reflect on the periſhable monuments of human magnificence.

The noble plain, on which ſtood the once glorious Perſepolis, afforded them inexhauſtible matter of curioſity and meditation: this plain, extending about nineteen leagues, abounds every where with villages, and is watered by the great river Araxes. Nature has been ſo induſtrious in the defence of it, that ſhe has raiſed before it mountains, that bear all the appearance, and might anſwer the end of artificial fortifications. From hence the travellers were amuſed with the ruinous remains of many noble edifices, that had once adorned the range of mountains: but when they were come to that part of them which covered the ancient palace of Perſepolis, the ſtupendous ruin ſtruck them with ſilent aſtoniſhment. Porticoes, which had withſtood the aſſaults of time more than two thouſand years; broken columns of different lengths, riſing at conſiderable diſtances within the limits of the ſame pile; ſculptured portals, through whoſe frowning arches the winds paſſed with a hollow murmuring; numberleſs figures engraven on the pilaſtres of thoſe portals; and multitudes of hieroglyphics on the different parts of the ſpacious ruin; gave the travellers a mournful and magnificent idea of the priſtine grandeur of this edifice.

The merchant obſerving Solyman to be totally abſorbed in thought, would not interrupt the melancholy pleaſure of his contemplations; but waited, in ſilence, till, with an air of unaffected concern, he thus expreſſed his ſentiments on Perſepolis.

'I am at a loſs, my friend, in the midſt of theſe magnificent ruins, whether I ſhould think more highly or more meanly of mankind. Pride raiſed this lofty edifice, and pride deſtroyed it. The vanity of a Cyrus, a Darius, or a Xerxes, adorned thoſe ſuperb columns; and the vanity of an Alexander defaced them. Theſe domes were not reared ſolely for regal magnificence and ſecurity; but to aid the appetites of poverty and luxury, and to ſecrete the royal pleaſures from thoſe that toiled to gratify them. Thus, as this noble ſtructure was poſſibly raiſed not only for vanity but for riot; ſo, probably, by vanity, inflamed by riot, it fell: probably, at the requeſt of a ſmiling harlot, the towers of Perſepolis blazed for her diverſion; probably, becauſe the conqueror had taken too large a draught of wine, this palace, the glory of eaſtern art, ſunk to the ground: a ſtriking inſtance of the vanity of human labours, and the depravity of human nature! On the other hand, while I conſider the work of the artiſt; while I am delighted with the ſymmetry and proportion, which is yet to be traced through theſe maimed ruins, and ſtruck with the bold relief of the ancient Perſian architecture; I forget the motives both of the erection and demolition of Perſepolis; and admire the induſtry and ingenuity of man, that gave ſuch grace and beauty to theſe maſſy ſtructures.'

'Your ſentiments,' ſaid the merchant, 'are much the ſame with my own: but give me leave now to conduct you to a mountain, about two leagues diſtant from theſe ruins, and ſituated between two of the moſt beautiful plains in the world. This mountain conſiſts of one entire rock, capable of the moſt exquiſite poliſh: it is reduced to form by art, and it's ſides are perpendicular; ſo that, at a diſtance, it has the appearance of a wall. Upon this rock are ſeveral pieces of baſs relief, exquiſitely performed; in one of which is repreſented a combat between the King of Perſia and the King of the Indies; the latter of whom, according to the tradition of the times, was ſubdued. There are, beſides, many other figures, of which, though you may not diſcover the deſign, you will be pleaſed with the execution.'

Solyman proceeded with his friend to the mountain, much delighted, as well with the extraordinary appearance of the rock, as the uncommon beauty of the plains that were ſpread on either hand beneath, interſperſed with villas ſhaded by trees, extenſive meadows, and paſtures filled with flocks. When they had gratified their curioſity, and indulged

indulge' their ſpeculations, they proceeded on their journey, and in a ſhort time arrived at the gulph of Baſſora.

The merchant, having here found the veſſel he expected, told Solyman, that if his inclination led him to Europe, he could accommodate him with a convenient paſſage; informing him, at the ſame time, that his own affairs would detain him ſome years longer in Perſia. Solyman, whoſe heart was firmly attached to the merchant, long heſitated between friendſhip and curioſity: however, as he muſt have parted with him, had he continued his travels in Aſia, and was not totally without hopes of ſeeing him in what he called the new world, he determined to accept his offer.

CHAP. IX.

AS the ſhip was to remain ſome time in the gulph, Solyman took the opportunity to make the tour of India. In his way he viſited the Iſle of Ormus, than which no part of nature wears a more diſmal appearance. Excepting a few houſes, which make the capital of the place, the whole looks like a heath, blaſted by lightning, or burnt up by deſign: yet here, in this ſcene of dreary deſolation, Solyman had the mortification to meet with an exile from the city of Iſpahan.

'Surely,' ſaid he to the unhappy man, 'you muſt have been ſo unfortunate as to commit ſome enormous crime, condemned as you are to this miſerable abode!'

'Stranger,' replied the exile, 'I have been unfortunate, but not unjuſt. One day, being at the Perſian court, I told a gentleman who ſtood near me, in a low whiſper, that I thought the Sultana Moratte extremely beautiful. This was my crime: and it was the decree of imperial juſtice, that for this I ſhould wear out the remains of life in this dreary ſolitude.'

'Heavens!' ſaid Solyman, 'what madneſs muſt poſſeſs mankind, to lodge unlimited power in the hands of any one human being! When the decrees of juſtice muſt be iſſued by numbers united, there are many means of reſtraining partial or illegal ſentences: ſelf-intereſt, revenge, envy, and every other cauſe of perverting juſtice, would then operate feebly, when oppoſed by public ſhame, divided intereſts, and the open appearance of equity. But what comfort can you receive from uſeleſs declamation? I can help you to the means of deliverance from this wretched priſon; and I think that you are reſtrained by no principle of duty from embracing them; for it is impoſſible, that Divine Power ſhould enforce obedience to the decrees of injuſtice. I am now about to travel through India: at my return, I will again viſit Ormus and you; and if you ſhall be inclined to exchange your priſon for the ſpacious kingdoms of Europe, I will procure you a paſſage thither.'

The exile heard theſe words with inconceiveable tranſport: he threw himſelf at the feet of Solyman, and expreſſed his delight in one emphatical word, crying out, 'Liberty, liberty!' The pleaſure of the traveller was ſcarce inferior to that of the exile. 'Surely,' ſaid he to himſelf, 'the diffuſion of happineſs is the higheſt bliſs that the human heart is capable of! I feel more delight in the hope of defeating the malice of injurious power, than in any thing I have ever met with, either before or ſince the beginning of my travels.'

CHAP. X.

SOLYMAN now left Ormus, and proceeded towards the frontiers of India. Though the country lies nearly in the ſame climate with the ſouthern provinces of Perſia, yet the aſpect of it is different; and it is furniſhed with other kinds of plants and animals, as well as with people of a different complexion, and different manners: indeed nature ſeems to have made the intercourſe of different nations neceſſary, by ſupplying each with ſome peculiar conveniences.

Solyman paſſed not through the provinces of the Mogul's empire, without inſtruction, as well as amuſement. He was ſkilled in the natural hiſtory of plants and animals; and he found here abundant opportunity to exerciſe that kind of knowledge. He was often amuſed by obſerving, how nearly

brutal

brutal ſenſe borders upon human reaſon, in the reflecting ſagacity of the elephant, and the adroit miſchief of the baboon.

Small, however, in compariſon, was the pleaſure he received from the natural rarities of India, to that which the excellent adminiſtration of juſtice in the ſeveral provinces afforded him. The police of that country appeared to him moſt wiſely calculated for the preſervation of peace and property; the magiſtrates that were appointed to adminiſter juſtice in their ſeveral diſtricts, being obliged to keep perſons continually employed to watch the dealings of commerce, and attend both to public and private tranſactions; for the iniquity of which themſelves were to be accountable, and the emperor might always be appealed to.

But when he came to Dehli, the capital of the Mogul's empire, his opinion of the Indian policy was much altered. He there had the mortification to find a miniſtry of wives, and a court of concubines, at whoſe diſcretion the principal poſts in the civil and military eſtabliſhments were uſually diſpoſed of; and he who was moſt recommended by his perſon and addreſs, was ſure to obtain the higheſt office in the legiſlature or the army. To find that the bands of muſic at court conſiſted only of women, gave him no diſguſt: 'There,' ſaid the traveller, 'the ladies are in their proper ſphere. Let them cultivate all the ſoft and engaging graces; let them employ themſelves in the embelliſhments of art, and the excurſions of fancy: but let them not interfere in the important concerns of government; nor raiſe thoſe to the places of power, whoſe accompliſhments are ſuited only to their taſte.'

As Solyman was diſpleaſed with the caballing arts of the Indian ladies, ſo he was ſhocked at their inhuman and unnatural ſuperſtition. With horror and amazement did he ſometimes behold a woman, in the bloom of life and beauty, ruſh into the flames, to accompany the manes of her dead huſband: and if nature ſhuddered at the thought of this dreadful ſacrifice, or female ſoftneſs ſhrunk into fear or irreſolution; he beheld a number of diabolical prieſts, with execrable ſcreams and faces of horror, puſhing forward the poor trembling reluctant woman to the burning pile. 'Eternal Mithra!' ſaid the afflicted youth, 'what havock 'does ſuperſtition make among thy 'works! when once that fiend enters 'the human heart, nature and reaſon 'are driven out; their ſacred lights 'are wholly extinguiſhed: truth and 'humanity are trampled upon; and 'the deteſted fury leads her infatuated 'votaries through the horrors of darkneſs, into the arms of death!'

CHAP. XI.

SOLYMAN was the more affected by this infernal cuſtom, as he feared it might one day be the fate of a lady, with whom he had contracted an intimate friendſhip, and for whom he had the moſt tender regard. This amiable perſon was a native of Dehli, and her name Almena. As the houſes in which they lodged were contiguous, ſhe firſt drew his attention by her muſic, which was her favourite employment, and in which ſhe was greatly ſkilled. Solyman had a taſte for all the fine arts; and after the enquiries and obſervations of the day, he felt an irreſiſtible pleaſure, in liſtening, from his portico, to the evening muſic of Almena. His heart ſoon became prejudiced in favour of a lady, who had afforded him ſo much entertainment; and he wiſhed for nothing more than an opportunity of expreſſing his gratitude.

It was uſual for Almena to take a morning walk in the ſuburbs of Dehli. Solyman obſerved this; and introduced himſelf to her converſation, by paying his acknowledgments. There is ſome ſecret attraction in congenial natures, which draws them together, without the forms of a long acquaintance. Solyman was ſoon convinced, that he diſcovered, in Almena, a diſpoſition perfectly ſuited to his own: her converſation was the picture of a mind enlarged by virtue, and enlightened by learning: ſhe had none of the trifling follies or the inſignificant levity of her ſex; yet her manner was animated and chearful: ſhe had no ebullitions of giddy wit; but her language was the clear and natural image of poliſhed ſenſe, and unaffected knowledge. Solyman left no means unattempted to cultivate a friendſhip that promiſed ſo much felicity.

licity. He conſtantly attended Almena on her morning walk; and, at every interview, entertained ſome new ſentiments in her favour. Her heart was not leſs benevolent than his own; 'You have ſeen, my friend,' ſaid ſhe, 'almoſt every thing in Dehli, that is 'worth the attention of a ſtranger: 'but I ſuppoſe you do not make it 'your buſineſs, as a traveller, merely 'to attend to what is uncommon or 'magnificent; not merely to explore 'the different operations of nature, and 'manners of men. Travel muſt afford 'you many opportunities, to relieve 'the indigent, to comfort the afflicted, 'to inform the ignorant, or reſcue the 'oppreſſed. Within the compaſs of 'my morning walk, there is a village, 'the inhabitants of which I call my 'people; they are all poor: to thoſe 'that are able to labour, I propoſe 'rewards for the greateſt induſtry; and 'thoſe who are incapacitated by age or 'ſickneſs, I take under my own pro-'tection.'

It is eaſy to conceive how much Solyman would be delighted with this account of Almena. When he found that to all the elegant graces of female ſoftneſs, ſhe added the virtues of benevolence, his friendſhip for her was heightened into the moſt refined affection. On the other hand, her regard for Solyman increaſed, as ſhe became acquainted with his improved underſtanding, and generous temper: for virtue loves her own image, wherever it is found.

CHAP. XII.

SOLYMAN had now paſſed many days at Dehli, in this pleaſing intercourſe of friendſhip; happy to aſſiſt his Almena in the diffuſion of happineſs, charmed with her virtues, and delighted with her converſation. The time, however, approached, when he was to think of his expedition into Europe: but the friendſhip of Almena, bound to his heart by ſtronger ties than that which he had before contracted with the merchant, overbalanced at once every thought of his voyage; he had, therefore, determined to remain at Dehli; when the poor exile at Ormus came into his mind. He ſtarted at the thought, as he would have done at the ghoſt of Ardavan. 'Tis done,' ſaid he: 'Adieu to Almena; adieu to the 'dear delights of her friendſhip, if they 'muſt be purchaſed at the expence of 'virtue!'

There is no precept of human wiſdom conceived to be of greater uſe, and therefore none more frequently urged, than that we ſhould learn to avoid the evils of life, from the irregularities and misfortunes of others; yet, important as this precept may be, it is, like moſt others, univerſally neglected. We obſerve, indeed, the events of life; and enquire into their cauſes with inſatiable curioſity; but we ſeldom draw any concluſions for the direction of our own conduct: we hear or read only for amuſement; and the ſtory paſſes by, without leaving any traces of inſtruction.

Solyman, who, from the firſt ſetting out on his travels, had received the ſtrongeſt convictions of the diſtreſſes of love, without the leaſt caution or reſiſtance, ſuffered that paſſion to make it's inroads under the appearance of friendſhip; and he now felt all the anguiſh, which he had before been a witneſs to near the village of Abdat. Not once, however, did he heſitate between love and virtue: the torrent of his grief for the loſs of Almena, violent as it was, could not bear down his determined integrity.

With a heart full of the moſt piercing ſorrow, he went to take leave of his beloved friend: he reſolved, nevertheleſs, to explain the cauſe of his departure with the moſt ſerene indifference, determined not to affect his Almena by the appearance of ſorrow; he reſolved—and threw himſelf at her feet in ſpeechleſs anguiſh.

Almena beheld his grief with united ſorrow and ſurprize; and, with tears that flowed from pity and friendſhip, intreated him to diſcover the cauſe of his diſtreſs. 'It is in vain, Almena,' ſaid he; 'it is in vain any longer to 'hide my heart from you: nor, indeed, 'ſhould I act the part of friendſhip, to 'diſſemble it's feelings. I, who was 'yeſterday the happieſt of mankind in 'the enjoyment of your converſation, 'am now the moſt miſerable. By the 'indiſpenſible laws of honour and hu-'manity, I am called from Dehli: but, 'alas! by the love of Almena, I am 'induced to ſtay. I know, my friend,

'there

'there is no alternative: but that 'knowledge is my misery. I go, then, 'from you and from happiness; perhaps never more to enjoy either: but 'when I am far from you, it will be 'some consolation to believe that you 'will remember the love and the truth 'of Solyman.'

Almena, as well as the emotions of her heart would give her leave, replied: 'Go, my friend; go where your virtue 'leads you; and Providence be your 'guide! Your friendship, while I have 'life, shall not be forgotten: no; Almena shall always respect your memory, and love you with the same affection as she does the dearest of her 'friends.'

A flood of tears followed these words; and Solyman, unable any longer to behold her sorrow, precipitately withdrew.

CHAP. XIII.

DEPRIVED of that serenity which ever waits on conscious virtue, when free from the great calamities of life, the innocent, the once happy Solyman, was now become the child of affliction. He repassed the provinces of India in deep melancholy, unaffected by every thing that might excite curiosity or exercise speculation. But, behold the power of virtue! and be convinced, whoever thou art that readest this story, that there is nothing equally capable of alleviating the afflictions which are incident to human life.

When he arrived at Ormus, and beheld the joy of the poor exile at the sight of his deliverer, he felt a torrent of pleasure in his breast, overflowing all the oppositions that grief had raised against it. 'O that Almena,' said he, 'were present! that I could communicate to her the happiness I feel in 'rescuing this poor Persian from the 'oppression of tyranny! how would 'her gentle heart rejoice and indulge 'itself with Solyman, in the delights 'of benevolence! Fate has been severe 'in dividing those, whose souls were 'made for each other: but it has left 'me this happiness, and I enjoy it.'

Solyman was now about to apply to his friend the merchant, who was still upon the coast, to procure a passage for the exile: but he could not resist the desire of writing immediately to Almena; and from Ormus he sent the following letter.

'TO ALMENA.

'SHALL Solyman be pardoned, if 'he intrude once more on the quiet 'of Almena? Dearest, best of women, 'I come not to wound thy gentle heart 'with my complaints: you shall not be 'told what I have suffered since my 'departure: no, Almena! you shall 'only know what I have enjoyed. The 'poor exile whom I mentioned to you 'at Dehli, is still in Ormus. When 'he perceived me from the rocks on 'which he used to wander daily to 'watch my coming, he flew towards 'me in an extasy of joy, crying out, "Liberty! my deliverer! liberty!" 'Here was a scene, my friend, that 'might have overbalanced every thing 'but the loss of your company. For 'that, Almena—forgive me—for that 'I must yet shed a tear. Adieu!

'SOLYMAN.'

CHAP. XIV.

AFTER the dismission of this letter, he went immediately to visit the merchant, who received him with the warmest expressions of friendship. 'Welcome,' said he, 'my valuable 'friend! whose uncommon virtues 'have made you devote the pleasurable 'season of life to the acquisition of 'knowledge, and the distribution of 'happiness.'

'For the latter of these purposes,' said Solyman, 'I now wait upon you. 'In the isle of Ormus is an unhappy 'Persian, whom the capricious cruelty 'of his prince has condemned to perpetual exile in that dismal prison. 'Were he a criminal, justice should 'have it's course; I might then have 'beheld him with pity, but should not 'have meditated his deliverance: but 'he is innocent, my friend, he is innocent and suffers. Cannot you assist 'me to effect his escape? cannot he have 'that passage to Europe, which you 'obligingly offered me?'

'To facilitate the escape of an exile,' replied the merchant, 'were as much 'as my interest and safety are worth in

'Perſia. I muſt not be concerned in 'it: but I will introduce you to the 'captain of a ſhip, and engage him to 'ſerve you in every thing you ſhall de-'ſire: after which, if you can take 'the exile along with you in diſ-'guiſe, or by any other means as your 'friend or attendant, perhaps he may 'eſcape without much difficulty or 'danger. I have diſpatched my buſi-'neſs on the coaſt, and am obliged to 'return to Iſpahan: let us now there-'fore, if you pleaſe, wait upon the 'captain.'

Solyman, as he had been in hopes of procuring the exile a paſſage without going himſelf into Europe, from which the friendſhip of Almena had weaned his inclinations, was ſomewhat embarraſſed by this account. However, as he was determined at all events to deliver the poor Perſian, he went immediately to the apartments of the captain, to whom the merchant recommended him as a particular friend, who wanted to make the tour of Europe. The captain received them with the freedom and chearfulneſs peculiar to his ſtation, and promiſed Solyman the beſt accommodations of his ſhip; but told him, that ſhe muſt remain there a few months before ſhe could get out of the gulph.

Of this delay, though not anſwerable to his impatient wiſhes for the deliverance of the exile, Solyman reſolved to make uſe, in viſiting his father and the valley of Irwan. As ſoon, therefore, as he had acquainted the exile with what he had to hope, and adviſed him to provide ſecretly for his voyage, and his ſubſiſtence in a diſtant country, he ſailed from the gulph up the Euphrates, as far as where the Tigris empties itſelf into that river, and from thence proceeded by land to the valley of Irwan.

CHAP. XV.

THE venerable Ardavan had aſcended an eminence near his houſe, to enjoy the beauties of the ſummer evening, and to offer up a prayer to the departing ſun for Solyman, when Solyman appeared before him.

What language can paint the emotions of paternal affection! The feeble remains of aged life twice fainted beneath the weight of joy. At length recovering, he cried, 'It is enough! 'Solyman lives! Heaven has regard-'ed the virtues of my ſon, and reſtored 'him to the arms of Ardavan.'

Solyman was not leſs affected by this meeting; nor leſs delighted to find his aged parent ſtill enjoying health and reaſon, in the decline of life. But his happineſs was allayed with anxiety. He viſited the favourite ſcenes of his native valley, in hopes of finding that delight, which he thought to be connected with the idea of them; but his imagination was ſtill at Dehli. As love and melancholy are of the ſiſterhood of poetry, he had not been long in the valley before he wrote the following lines.

TO ALMENA, FROM THE BANKS OF THE IRWAN.

WHERE trembling poplars ſhade their parent vale,
And tune to melody the mountain gale;
Where Irwan murmurs muſically ſlow,
And breathing breezes through his oſiers blow;
Friend of my heart, behold thy poet laid
In the dear ſilence of his native ſhade!
Ye ſacred vales, where oft the muſe, unſeen,
Led my light ſteps along the moon-light green;
Ye ſcenes, where peace and fancy held their reign,
For ever lov'd, and once enjoy'd again!
Ah! where is, now, that nameleſs bliſs refin'd;
That tranquil hour, that vacancy of mind?

As ſweet, the wild roſe bares it's balmy breaſt;
As ſoon, the breeze with murmurs ſooths to reſt;
As ſmooth, the ſtream of ſilver Irwan flows;
As fair, each flower along his border blows:
Yet dwells not here that nameleſs bliſs refin'd,
That tranquil hour, that vacancy of mind.
Is it that knowledge is allied to woe;
And are we happy, only ere we know?
Is it that hope witholds her golden ray,
That fancy's fairy viſions fade away?
Or can I, diſtant far from all that's dear,
Be happy only when Almena's near?
That truth, the feelings of my heart diſcloſe:
Too dear the friendſhip for the friend's repoſe.

Thus

Thus mourn'd the muſe, when, thro' his oſiers wild,
The hill-born Irwan rais'd his head, and ſmil'd:
'Child of my hopes,' he fondly cried, 'forbear:
'Nor let thy Irwan witneſs thy deſpair.
'Has peace indeed forſook my flow'ry ſhore?
'Shall fame and hope, and fancy charm 'no more?
'Tho' fame and hope in kindred air depart,
'Yet fancy ſtill ſhould hold thee to her heart:
'For, at thy birth, the village hind has ſeen
'Her light wings waving o'er the ſhadowy 'green;
'With roſy wreaths ſhe crown'd the new-'born hours,
'And rival fairies fill'd thy bed with flowers:
'In vain—if grief ſhall waſte thy blooming 'years,
'And life diſſolve in ſolitude and tears—'

Where are the delights of the valley of Irwan, where the flowery variety of it's paſtures and meadows, it's hills that roſe gradually to meet the morning ſun, and it's groves that ſpread their foliage to exclude the heats of mid-day? Wrapt in the gloom of penſive ſolitude, the ſon of Ardavan was now negligent of theſe, and of all that once delighted or amuſed him. In vain did his father deſire a relation of his travels; and in vain did he begin it: when he attempted to ſpeak of Perſepolis, he gave a deſcription of Dehli; when he was aſked after ſome other place, he mentioned the village of Almena: inſtead of deſcribing the people of India, he deſcribed the perſon of Almena; and when an account of their manners was requeſted, 'Her manners,' he replied, 'are ſuch, as the immortal Mithra 'looks down upon with delight.'

CHAP. XVI.

ARDAVAN was now no longer at a loſs to account for the gloomy inconſiſtency of his ſon's behaviour: but willing to be ſtill more convinced of what he ſuſpected to be the cauſe, he applied to his paſſions the ſtory of thoſe lovers whom he had recommended to his care. At the mention of the lovers, Solyman was rouzed from his melancholy negligence, into the moſt eager attention. 'Tell me, my father,' ſaid the impatient youth; 'tell me, I 'intreat you, the fate of the lovers?'

'I thank you,' replied the ſage, 'for 'putting it in my power to aſſiſt the 'unfortunate. From your compaſſion 'for the ſufferings of theſe lovers, and 'your attempt to alleviate them, you 'will feel more ſenſibly the power of 'the ſame conſolation, when your own 'heart becomes a prey to the diſtreſſes 'of love.'

Solyman diſcovered, by his emotions, the effect which this ſhort preface had upon him.

'You know,' continued Ardavan, 'a ſmall building which I erected ſome 'years ago for a retreat in the ſummer 'months: you remember it's ſituation, 'in the depth of a ſpacious wood; 'which is only acceſſible by one nar-'row paſſage, to which I have provided 'a door, ſo beſet with evergreens, that 'it is impoſſible for the moſt curious 'eye to perceive it: the canal of run-'ning water in the middle of the 'wood, and the beautiful graſs-plot, 'I have extended, ſince you left me, 'to the ſummer-houſe. To this place 'I conducted the lovers as ſoon as I 'had heard their ſtory. There they 'continued for ſome time, attended 'by one of my faithful domeſticks, who 'ſupplied them with every neceſſary; 'and they were viſited almoſt every 'day by myſelf. O, my ſon, how ex-'quiſite was the delight, to behold the 'happineſs of this innocent pair, and 'at the ſame time to conſider myſelf 'as in ſome meaſure contributing to 'it! ſurely, this was to partake of the 'pleaſure of the Deity, which we be-'lieve to conſiſt in his univerſal pow-'er of removing evil and diſpenſing 'good!

'After ſome time I was informed, 'that the Khan of Bukharia, who had 'purchaſed the maiden of her father, 'was depoſed and baniſhed by the 'Sophi. This gave us new hopes; 'and it was agreed that the youth 'ſhould return to Abdat, to learn the 'diſpoſition of the unnatural parent. 'He accordingly went; and told him, 'that he would endeavour to find his 'daughter, upon condition he would 'conſent to their marriage. The 'wretch, though he was no ſtranger 'to their mutual paſſion, inſiſted, that 'no man ſhould ever have his daughter, 'who would not pay the ſame price 'for her which the Khan of Bukharia 'had offered.

'As this price far exceeded the abi-
'lity of the lover, he returned to Irwan,
'fallen from thoſe pleaſing hopes,
'which he had ſo lately formed, of
'enjoying at once his love and his li-
'berty. The father, convinced that
'his daughter was in the poſſeſſion of
'the young man, and not now with-
'out hopes of recovering her, and of-
'fering her again to ſale, hired a ſet
'of ruffians to watch his return, and
'to extort from him a confeſſion of
'the place where ſhe was ſecreted. Of
'this deſign, however, he was timely
'apprized by an honeſt villager of Ab-
'dat, to whom one of the ruffians had
'communicated their buſineſs; and he
'came off in diſguiſe, and eſcaped
'their notice.

'About two months after, it was
'reported that the father had died of
'vexation for the diſappointment of
'his avaricious views: I, therefore,
'diſpatched a ſervant to enquire into
'the truth of this report; and finding
'it confirmed, conducted the lovers to
'Abdat without farther apprehenſion.
'The maiden, who was an only child,
'inherited her father's fortune, which
'was very conſiderable: but as great
'part of it had been amaſſed by op-
'preſſion, ſhe made reſtitution to thoſe
'whom his avarice had injured, and
'ſhe now enjoys the remainder with
'happineſs and her lover.'

'What you tell me,' ſaid Solyman,
'gives me inexpreſſible ſatisfaction:
'for the lovers are poſſeſſed of emi-
'nent virtue; and to be inſtrumen-
'tal to the happineſs of virtuous
'lovers, is the moſt delightful taſk
'within the province of benevolence.
'Indeed thoſe hearts only, that are
'generous and noble, can be capable
'of the tender ſenſibility of love: for
'the breaſt which harbours malignity
'and envy, can never feel the ſympa-
'thetic tenderneſs, which is the very
'eſſence of that gentle paſſion.'

'Your obſervation,' replied the ſage,
'may be very juſt; and it is, there-
'fore, the more neceſſary for thoſe,
'to whom nature and the principles of
'a virtuous education have given the
'bleſſing of an open heart, to guard
'againſt the inroads of that paſſion: if
'there is no probability of an uninter-
'rupted enjoyment of it's object, they
'ſhould look upon it's advances, as
'of an evil that will deſtroy their peace.
'The pleaſures of real love are, per-
'haps, the moſt refined, the moſt de-
'licate and ſenſible, of any that we
'are capable of enjoying: but, believe
'me, thoſe are fortunate lovers, who
'are indemnified, by theſe, for the
'many uneaſy hours, the reſtleſs anxi-
'eties, and the painful apprehenſions
'they undergo.'

In theſe general terms did Ardavan deliver his inſtructions to his ſon, who received them with a ſilent conviction of their truth and propriety; and immediately after this converſation, retired to offer up the following prayer to the ſun for Almena.

'Incomparable, and Everlaſting!
'whoſe univerſal eye ſees nothing
'fairer, nothing more virtuous than
'Almena; O let that eye look upon
'her with the vigilance of a parent.
'She moſt reſembles thee in the con-
'tinual exerciſe of beneficence; cheriſh,
'therefore, thoſe virtues, that are con-
'genial with thy own; and let the dear
'poſſeſſor, through thy benignant in-
'fluence, enjoy the conſtant bleſſings
'of health and chearfulneſs: but if
'ſome portion of ſorrow be the birth-
'right of every human being, Immor-
'tal Mithra! may Almena only ſigh
'for the abſence of her friend.'

CHAP. XVII.

IN ſuch exerciſes did Solyman em-
ploy his retired hours, till the time approached for his return to Ormus. As he was determined, if poſſible, to avoid going into Europe, he made no mention of that circumſtance to his father: his engagements to the exile were a ſufficient reaſon for his departure; and, in a ſhort time, he arrived at the gulph, and waited upon the Engliſh captain, who was preparing for his voyage. Solyman informed him, that upon ſome intereſting occaſion he was obliged to relinquiſh his deſign of viſiting Europe; but that he would recommend a Perſian lady to his care, who was bound for England; and he begged that ſhe might enjoy all the retirement her ſituation could afford. As no objection was made to this propoſal, he privately purchaſed the habit of a Perſian lady, which he concealed ſome days on the coaſt of Ormus; and under favour of the night, he found no difficulty

difficulty to procure a boat to the Engliſh veſſel. In a few hours they got under ſail; and having received repeated aſſurances of the captain's care, and engaged the good offices of his crew by a handſome gratuity, he procured a paſſage by ſea to the coaſt of India.

The ſtate of his heart was now very different from what it had been a few days before: he had diſcharged his engagements to the exile, with all the ſucceſs that he could wiſh; and his face was now ſet towards Dehli. On he travelled with the eager pace of a lover, and in a few days reached the capital of the Mogul's empire.

The evening he arrived, he flew to the houſe of Almena, who received him with emotions of tenderneſs which ſhe was ſcarcely able to conceal. When the firſt ſalutations were paſſed, ſhe aſked him, how he had diſpoſed of the exile, and why he did not accompany him to Europe as he had propoſed. He informed her by what means he had procured the exile's eſcape; adding, that from the letters he had written, if ſhe had received them, ſhe might at once ſee the reaſon both of his rejecting the European voyage, and his return to Dehli.

'What would it availed me,' ſaid he, 'to have viſited the diſtant regions 'of the univerſe? What pleaſure or 'amuſement could I have expected to 'find in Europe, when all my heart 'holds dear was ſtill in Aſia? Believe 'me, this place is now more than the 'whole world to me; and the friend-'ſhip of Almena is the only pleaſure 'I can enjoy.'

'I have received your letters,' ſaid ſhe; 'and if they ſpeak the language 'of your heart, I am no ſtranger to 'it's feelings. To deal ingenuouſly 'with you, I am ſenſible of your merit, 'and admire your virtues: and were I 'not more happy in my preſent con-'dition, than I could hope to be in any 'other; I know not the man, with 'whom I would rather divide the en-'joyments of life, than with Solyman.'

'Is it poſſible then,' ſaid Solyman, 'that you can think the condition of 'celibacy happier than that of mar-'riage? Undoubtedly, the principal 'happineſs of mankind depends on the 'intercourſe of ſociety, and the con-'nections of friendſhip: marriage is 'nothing elſe but a ſtate of friendſhip, 'in which the friends, by uniting their 'intereſts, have a conſtant and unin-'terrupted enjoyment of each other. 'Nature aids this union, and reaſon 'approves it: can any condition bid 'fairer for happineſs, than that in 'which the mutual delights of friend-'ſhip can only be torn from us by the 'hand of death?'

'There may be ſome truth,' anſwered ſhe, 'in what you obſerve; 'but there is an inconſtancy in human 'nature, that makes it dangerous even 'for two friends to enter into any con-'nection that cannot be broken; and 'an unaccountable caprice, that makes 'us quarrel with our happineſs, be-'cauſe we are ſure of enjoying it.'

'Were we deterred from every pur-'ſuit,' ſaid Solyman, 'by the ap-'prehenſion of thoſe inconveniences 'which the foibles and frailties of 'our nature might bring upon us; we 'ſhould never be either virtuous or 'happy, but might languiſh away our 'lives in ſolitary and unſocial indo-'lence. To avoid the inconveniences 'of human inconſtancy, marriage is, 'ſurely, the beſt inſtitution in the 'world; for what could be more like-'ly to fix the inconſtant, than the ha-'bitual intercourſe of kindneſs and 'good offices; than that gratitude, 'which is due to the long exerciſe of 'affectionate tenderneſs; and thoſe 'dear pledges, which muſt depend for 'happineſs and ſupport on the unani-'mity of their parents?

'There is, indeed, an inſuperable 'objection to your being married in 'India: I mean that contempt, or the 'horrid alternative of torture, which 'is entailed on the unhappy wo-'man who ſurvives her huſband. But 'that objection ſhall vaniſh immedi-'ately,' continued the lover with a look of paſſionate earneſtneſs: 'let us 'go, my friend, let us go to love and 'happineſs, in the valley of Irwan. 'That place, which ſo lately afforded 'a retreat to the lovers whoſe diſtreſſes 'I have related to you, ſhall then be-'come eternally ſacred to love and 'friendſhip: that place, whoſe beau-'tiful ſcenes I ſo lately beheld with in-'difference, I ſhall then viſit with 'rapture. Extaſy is in the thought! 'to enjoy, with Almena, the ſhades of 'Irwan; with her to walk in my na-

'tive

'tive fields; with her to ſit down on 'the banks of my favourite ſtream; 'for her to pluck the flower, whoſe 'beauty may have drawn her atten-'tion: to lead her through thoſe ro-'mantic ſcenes, that delighted the in-'nocent enthuſiaſm of my childhood; 'and to ſhew her the more ſolitary 'retreats, which I ſought when her 'friendſhip had firſt taught me to ſigh!'

Thus Solyman poured out the natural and paſſionate ſenſations of love; and Almena, whoſe heart was far from being indifferent to him, eaſily caught the enthuſiaſm. 'To your honour, 'and your friendſhip,' ſaid ſhe, 'I 'can truſt every thing. I am ready 'to attend you to thoſe ſcenes, of 'which you have given me ſo lively a 'deſcription: whether they may an-'ſwer it or not, or whatever they may 'be, the friendſhip of Solyman will 'make them agreeable.'

It is eaſier to conceive than to expreſs the joy which the lover felt upon this declaration. Within a few days they ſet forward from Dehli, on their journey to the valley of Irwan; and for the greater expedition, and the leſs fatigue, they determined to go by ſea, and accordingly proceeded to the coaſt, where they went on board a trading veſſel bound for the Perſian gulph.

CHAP. XVIII.

AT that time there was war between two petty princes of the hither peninſula of India; and unfortunately, the ſhip in which they embarked belonged to one of theſe powers. They had not proceeded above five leagues from the coaſt, when they were purſued by the foe. After an obſtinate and bloody engagement, they were boarded; and their enemies, when they had ſtripped the veſſel of every thing valuable, diſmiſſed it.

They diſmiſſed the veſſel; but they took Almena. What heart does not bleed, what eye does not ſhed a tear, for the miſerable Solyman! They diſmiſſed the veſſel; but they took Almena. Prayers and tears, and agony and anguiſh, were vain. The lover ſaw his dear, trembling, fainting maid, dragged by the hands of the unfeeling ſailors into their own ſhip, after they had bound him to prevent the effects of his rage. 'I aſk not for your mer-'cy,' cried the wretched youth: 'only 'take me into your veſſel along with 'that lady, and prepare your tortures, 'your racks, and wheels; for me 'prepare them, and let me periſh be-'fore theſe eyes loſe ſight of Almena!'

While Solyman was vainly uttering theſe pitiable exclamations, the enemy ſteered away, and was in a ſhort time out of ſight. The men of the ſhip in which he was, apprehenſive of ſome bad conſequences from the violence of his rage, were prudent enough to let him continue bound; while he now loaded them with the reproachful terms of ſlaves and cowards, and now excited them by promiſes, or intreated them by prayers, to purſue the foe. The ſhip having loſt her freight, did not proceed on her intended voyage, but returned to the coaſt of India.

When they arrived, Solyman was informed, that the veſſel which had taken them belonged to the King of Sundah, who at that time was at war with the King of Kanara. Upon this information, as ſoon as he had received intelligence of the ſituation of the kingdom of Sundah, he went immediately in queſt of Almena. Though almoſt worn to death with fatigue and ſorrow, he travelled night and day, till he reached the country. But alas! when he was there, what could he do! Stranger as he was to the people, and in a great meaſure to their language, he had as much to hope from chance, as from application, for the diſcovery of Almena.

He would now have ſunk under the weight of his misfortunes, had he not availed himſelf of the firſt advice of Ardavan, and firmly relied on the Eternal Providence: 'Immortal Mi-'thra!' ſaid the afflicted youth; 'thou 'beholdeſt me oppreſſed with miſery: 'but thy beams ſtill ſhine upon me; 'and while I enjoy thy light, I will 'hope for thy favour!'

Thus comforting himſelf, he ſtill continued his ſearch: depending, for the neceſſary ſupports of nature, on the precarious bounty of the villages through which he paſſed; frequently making the mountain rocks the refuge of his night's repoſe, when nature, exhauſted with toil and ſorrow, in her own defence inclined him to ſleep. He wandered inceſſantly from town to town, and from province to province; often

often exposed to the attacks of savage beasts, and often suffering the insults of the more savage people.

Having in vain gone over a large tract of the inland country, he now confined his search to the coast, in hopes that he might again see the vessel which took his Almena. Day by day he wandered on the beach, constantly casting his eyes on the immense waste of waters, and watching the approach of every vessel that he saw, with the same impatience of expectation, as if he had been assured that it contained Almena.

CHAP. XIX.

AS he was walking one evening by the castle of Sevasir, he heard a mournful voice proceeding from a garden within the fort. Solyman never neglected the voice of sorrow: he went nearer to the place from whence it seemed to proceed; and looking through the iron palisadoes with which the garden was encompassed, he beheld a lady sitting in a melancholy posture on a flower-bank at a small distance.

In the irresistible transport of his heart, he cried aloud, 'Almena!' The lady rose; and as she came towards him, he perceived his mistake: 'Pardon me, Madam,' said he; 'I am 'an unhappy man, who have lost every 'thing that is dear to me in a lady, 'whom I have sought in vain for many 'months in this province; where I have 'still reason to believe she is confined, 'if, indeed, she yet lives; if she is not 'fallen a sacrifice to her own miseries, 'or to the barbarous cruelty of the 'villains who tore her from me.'

'Stranger,' said the lady, 'it is long 'since I have known any comfort my-'self, and I am afraid I can have little 'for you. Your miseries affect me 'much: the same did my beloved hus-'band once undergo, for whom I now 'mourn, and must for ever mourn in 'hopeless sorrow.'

'Is your husband then dead,' said Solyman; 'or is he only lost to you, as 'Almena is to me? If the latter is the 'case, you may yet have hope: the 'all-seeing eye of Providence looks 'down upon all his creatures, and he 'will assuredly redress the misfortunes 'of the virtuous.'

'We were inhabitants,' replied the lady, 'of the kingdom of Kanara. 'The Sundians, who made an incur-'sion into our territories, and amongst 'many other wretched people, carried 'off my husband and me—' 'How, 'Madam!' interrupted Solyman: 'they 'were merciful, if they suffered your 'husband to accompany you.'—'Their 'mercy,' said she, 'did not extend so 'far: they presented me to the gover-'nor of this castle; and my husband 'they imprisoned in a distant part of 'the kingdom.'

'Ever since I came within these ha-'ted walls, their savage master has ag-'gravated my miseries, by the morti-'fying offers of his love; totally re-'gardless of my sorrow and distraction, 'a thousand times has the unfeeling 'wretch insulted my torn heart with 'odious caresses, and still continues to 'persecute me in the same manner, 'upbraiding me with ingratitude for 'what he calls his kindness in permit-'ting me to live. But I am not alone 'in my misfortunes: here are num-'bers of unhappy women under the 'same confinement, whose sufferings 'too nearly resemble my own. Some 'of them, like me, have still resisted the 'importunities of the tyrant; while 'others, more, I hope, through fear 'than inclination, have unhappily sub-'mitted to his will.'

At these words, terror and apprehension were again rouzed in the heart of Solyman, and created a conflict which shook his frame. He stood aghast and motionless for a moment: at last recollecting himself, 'Is there,' said he, 'tell me, Madam, is there a lady within 'these walls, a native of Dehli, who 'was taken some months ago from on 'board a Kanarian vessel by the Sun-'dians?'

'To that question,' said the lady, 'I can make no answer: we are all 'kept in different apartments, and not 'allowed to converse with each other; 'we are not even permitted, but alone, 'to walk in these gardens: and should 'I now be observed to talk with you, 'though through these detested bars, 'my future liberty would probably be 'endangered. All that you can do to 'know, whether the lady you have lost 'be in this place, is to attend at the 'different hours of the day near these 'palisadoes; where you will be able to

'observe,

'observe, in their reſpective turns, the 'appearance of the women in the gar-'dens. But you will incur great dan-'ger in the experiment: and after all, 'ſhould you find that your lady is 'here, what can it avail you? You 'will only have the mortification to 'know it, without being able to reſ-'cue her.'

CHAP. XX.

SOLYMAN took his leave of the lady; and having formed his reſolution, waited with the utmoſt impatience for the light of morning. He happened, indeed, to be ſo far ſecured from ſuſpicion, as to be dreſt in a Sundian habit, which belonged to an officer of the ſhip that carried off Almena, who compelled him to take it in exchange for his own. But inſenſible of danger, at the earlieſt dawn he haſted to his poſt, and paſſed the day in alternate hope and deſpair: he ſaw many women, but he ſaw not Almena. In the evening, therefore, regretting the diſappointment even of thoſe expectations which he dreaded to have confirmed, he reſolved to quit his ſtation till the return of morning, when, by the glimmering of the moon, he perceived another lady enter the garden.

As ſhe came nearer, her image glanced through his heart more ſwiftly, than the lightning ſmites the traveller on the mountains of Hima. The lady was Almena. In a burſt of tranſport, he cried, 'Almena! Solyman!' ſtruck at once with the voice, the name, and the figure of Solyman, ſurprize overcame her, and ſhe fell ſenſeleſs upon the terras.

Solyman, unable to enter the garden, in an agony of terror, cried out, 'Save, 'ſave my Almena!' at the ſame time running round the walls in the utmoſt diſtraction. His exclamations alarmed the guard, who immediately ſecured him; though, from his cries and confuſion, they concluded him to be mad, and made their report of him as ſuch to the governor of the caſtle, who ordered him to be immediately brought before him.

Solyman, the moment he beheld the governor, fiercely cried out, 'I con-'jure thee, if thou art a human being, 'let me inſtantly fly to the relief of a 'lady in thy gardens.' The governor was alarmed by an appearance of reaſon in this requeſt, and ordered him to be ſecured, while he went himſelf into the gardens to know if there was any foundation for it. There he found Almena ſupporting herſelf againſt the wall, not having perfectly recovered either her ſtrength or reaſon. 'Art 'thou indeed my Solyman?' ſaid ſhe, 'If thou art my Solyman, ſupport me 'in thy arms.' In his arms he took her, and bore her to a pavilion, where he held her till her reaſon returned. She turned her eyes full upon him, and, with a look of fear and horror, ſhrunk from his embrace.

'Tell me, Madam; I beſeech you, 'tell me,' ſaid the governor, 'what is 'the cauſe of this diſtraction? Why 'are thoſe dear eyes ſo full of wild-'neſs and horror, and why do you 'look upon your protector with ſuch 'averſion? Is there then ſome other 'perſon more happy in your favour 'and affection, and muſt I for ever 'languiſh at your feet in vain?'

'If thou haſt any other affection for 'me,' ſaid Almena, 'than that which 'is inſpired by brutal inſtinct; if thou 'haſt more feeling than the walls that 'ſurround thee, thou wilt ſurely pity 'me. The dear unhappy man, whom 'I fear ere now thy guards have ſeized, 'is the friend for whoſe loſt thou haſt 'known me mourn ever ſince I came 'within thy power. Yes, thou wilt 'pity me; for thou haſt wept: when 'I related to thee my miſeries, the tears 'of compaſſion flowed from thine eyes. 'Let us throw ourſelves at thy feet; 'let us owe our happineſs to thee, and 'thou ſhalt have all the affection which 'is not due to Solyman.'

The weeping beauty, as ſhe uttered theſe words, threw herſelf before him in ſuch an agony of ſorrow, and ſuch a poſture of ſupplication, as would have moved any heart in which vice had not extinguiſhed every ſpark of humanity. Far from being affected by it, the governor of Sevaſir made her the following anſwer: 'Abſurd and vain! to 'ſuppoſe that I ſhould tamely yield 'that happineſs to another, which I 'could never obtain myſelf. Know, 'Madam, that both you and your lover 'are now in my power; and that he 'has no indulgence to hope for, but 'what your kindneſs to me may pro-

'cure

BRITISH
10 NO 100
MUSEUM

Dodd del. Heath sculp.

PARIS as the Act directs, by Harrison & Co. 15 May 1780.

'cure him.' With these words he withdrew; rather less offended at the thought of having a rival in Almena's affections, than pleased with the hope that he might terrify her into compliance by his menaces against her lover.

Almena remained in the most pitiable distress, sharpened by painful apprehensions for her own honour, and the life of Solyman; and wandering alone into the garden, she added one night of sorrow more to the many she had suffered.

Great God! what misery may one villain, armed with power, bring upon thy creatures! Were there not a state of existence, where vice shall be punished and virtue rewarded, how would thy works seem to reproach their Almighty Maker! But let the sons of men learn, that he who is infinitely wise, is also perfectly just; and that he can as easily take cognizance of the moral conduct of his creatures, as he could at first create this immense system of the universe, in which the minutest creature declares the skill of the Architect.

CHAP. XXI.

THE impious tyrant of Sevasir enjoyed the balm of sleep and the refreshment of rest, while the virtuous Solyman and Almena suffered the most grievous affliction.

When the morning appeared, Nagrakut, that was the wretch's name, went at his usual hour into the garden. Almena, who was still there, overcome by the weight of continued sorrow, had sunk into a transient slumber on a bench in the pavilion. Nagrakut approached and stood by her as she slumbered. There was a sight that might have excited tenderness in the breast of a savage: but it moved not the heart of Nagrakut, nor awakened any other passion in him but that of a libidinous desire. In a dream, she waved her hand, and cried, with a voice of mournful tenderness, 'Do not murder him, Na-'grakut! Let my Solyman live!' then letting fall the hand she had raised, she sunk again into silent slumber.

Nagrakut yet felt no pity; but placing himself near her on the bench, inclosed her in his arms. She awoke; and, finding herself in the embraces of the tyrant, shrieked out with the most distressful horror. Her cries pierced the cell where Solyman was confined. With the united strength of rage and terror, he burst the door of his prison; and running through the apartments of the castle with a dagger in his hand, which he had fortunately snatched up in the way, he flew to the garden.

Almena was still shrieking and struggling in the arms of Nagrakut, who endeavouring to sooth her to his embraces, had not observed the approach of Solyman. 'Villain,' said Solyman, 'remove thy execrable hands from the 'person of that lady, and employ them 'in the defence of thy own!' Nagrakut, who was the most abject coward, called aloud to his guards. 'Coward! 'slave!' said Solyman; 'draw this 'instant, or my dagger shall pierce 'thy heart.' Nagrakut then fell at his feet; and begging for mercy, promised him Almena and liberty. 'This 'moment then,' said Solyman, 'dismiss us from thy cursed prison.' No sooner had he uttered these words than the guards appeared. Nagrakut immediately beckoned to them to seize him: but Solyman, observing his motion, hastily ran up to him, and plunged his dagger into his heart.

The tyrant fell. No way of escape, however, was left for Solyman: he was instantly seized by the soldiers, loaded with heavy chains, and shut up, with Almena, in a strong apartment of the castle: with Almena he was shut up, for jealousy now no longer parted them; and she was considered as an accomplice in the murder of the governor.

This circumstance administered inexpressible consolation to them both. 'At last, my Almena,' said the lover, 'fortune has brought thee to my arms: 'but after what miseries, good Heaven! 'and in what circumstances! Yet my 'heart never once doubted the justice 'or the care of Providence; we shall 'yet be happy in the valley of Irwan.'

The spirits of Almena were so exhausted by the successive ravages of terror, sorrow, and surprize, that she reclined for some time in the arms of Solyman, unable to speak, and only venting her grief in broken and feeble sighs. The officers of the castle of Sevasir had sent in the mean time to the King of Sundah, to know in what manner he

would have the murderers of the governor executed.

The death of a villain is ſeldom regretted, even by thoſe to whom his villainies have been of ſervice. The King of Sundah always hated the governor of Sevaſir; but he dared not depoſe him, becauſe he had been eſtabliſhed under him by the Mogul: he, therefore, ſent no other commands to the officers of the caſtle, but that the priſoners ſhould remain there till farther orders.

Not long after this, a body of Kanarians entered the country of Sundah, and laid ſiege to the caſtle of Sevaſir. As the death of the governor had thrown all into confuſion, the fort was eaſily carried; and the Kanarians took priſoners all that were within the caſtle. Solyman and Almena, though they could not be diſpleaſed at this change of fortune, had yet another to encounter, which might prove as fatal to their happineſs as any they had eſcaped could have been.

It is a cuſtom in the eaſtern nations, to preſent the women that are taken in war to the kings, that they may ſelect whom they like: and the reſt are divided among the officers, according to their ſeveral ranks. All the ladies that were taken in the caſtle of Sevaſir, had this fate to undergo; and as the governor had been curious in his choice, theſe women were looked upon as a moſt valuable capture.

CHAP. XXII.

THEY were immediately conveyed to the court of Kanara, and preſented to the king for his choice. They all ſtood before him at the ſame time; and he looked upon each of them for ſome minutes: but his eye dwelt longer on Almena, than the reſt. Unfortunately, ſhe obſerved this; and her fear and confuſion new animated her features, and gave freſh beauties to her complexion. The king immediately ſelected her, and the reſt were diſmiſſed.

Solyman was all this time kept with the garriſon of Sevaſir, as a priſoner of war: but at length, having convinced the Kanarians, that he had no connections with the King of Sundah, and that he was willing to enter into the ſervice of their prince, his liberty was reſtored him. This was the only means by which he could attempt the recovery of Almena; who, as he was now informed, was retained by the king. He immediately repaired to the capital of Kanara; and ſignifying to the officers of the court, that he had ſome important intelligence relating to the war, to communicate to his majeſty, he gained an eaſy admittance to him.

When the king appeared, he proſtrated himſelf before him; and being commanded to ſpeak, he thus expreſſed himſelf: 'Let the King of Kanara 'live! for his ear is open to the com-'plaints of the unhappy, and he de-'ſpiſeth no man for the miſeries which 'chance hath brought upon him.'—'I am a man,' interpoſed the king: 'proceed.'—'It was my hand that put 'an end to the life of your enemy, 'the governor of Sevaſir.'—'In that,' replied the prince, 'you did me a ſig-'nal ſervice: but let me know your 'motives; and I ſhall be better able 'to judge of the action, as well as of 'my obligations to you for it.'

'O prince!' ſaid Solyman, 'I was 'poſſeſſed of a lady, more beautiful 'than the ſtar that overflows it's urn in 'the evening, and dearer to me than 'the life-drops of my heart. We were 'on board a Kanarian veſſel that was 'trading to the Perſian Gulph; and 'were bound to the valley of Irwan in 'Meſopotamia, the place of my nativi-'ty: but alas! before we had proceed-'ed many leagues from our coaſt, we 'were boarded by a pirate of Sundah. 'We were plundered, and diſmiſſed; 'but the dear partner of my heart was 'taken from me. After long ſearch, I 'found that ſhe was in the poſſeſſion 'of the governor of Sevaſir; who, re-'gardleſs of her miſeries, or the pre-'poſſeſſion of her heart, cruelly con-'tinued to inſult her with the offer of 'his love.'—'Inhuman wretch!' interrupted the king: 'but proceed.' This ejaculation gave Solyman new hopes, and he continued his relation.

'Walking one evening by the gar-'dens of the fort, I diſcovered her on 'a terras at a ſmall diſtance. She was 'ſo much ſurprized by the ſuddenneſs 'of my appearance, that ſhe fainted. 'Being unable to enter the gardens, 'in my diſtraction I cried for help; 'and my cries alarming the guard, I

'was

'was seized. That night I was confined in a dungeon of the castle; but 'early the next morning hearing the 'shrieks of a female voice, which I 'either knew or fear imagined to be 'that of my love, rage and terror gave 'me more than natural strength, and 'I burst open the door of my prison. 'I was unarmed; but, fortunately, a 'dagger lying in my way, I snatched 'it up, and flew to the garden from 'whence the voice proceeded. There 'I beheld the dear object of my affections trembling in the embraces of 'the tyrant: at the sight of me, he 'called aloud to his guards, cowardly 'refusing the offer I gave him of defending himself against my dagger: 'nay, he meanly begged his life, and 'offered me, on that condition, liberty for myself and the lady; but the 'guards immediately after coming up, 'he beckoned to them to seize me: I 'found time, however, to thrust my 'dagger into his base heart. Thus 'the villain perished.'—'And justice,' said the king, 'directed your arm.'

'O prince!' continued Solyman, 'I am still miserable. I have reason 'to believe, that some of your officers 'will detain that lady, as a prize taken 'in the castle of Sevasir.'—'No officer 'of mine,' replied the king, 'shall 'be suffered to detain her: let me know 'her name, and she shall be immediately restored to you.'—'Her name,' said Solyman, 'is Almena.'

The king appeared disturbed, and walked backward and forward for some moments in the utmost confusion. He knew, that Almena was the lady whom he had selected from the captives; and he had the most ardent affection for her. In a few moments he withdrew, and commanded Solyman to attend him the following day.

CHAP. XXIII.

THE heart of the king was, in the mean time, distracted by different passions; urged by the most powerful love to detain Almena, and dissuaded from that by truth, humanity, and shame. 'Am I,' said he, 'possessed 'of a throne, and shall I have no more 'power to indulge my wishes, than 'the peasant of the field! what is the 'worth or the end of absolute power, 'if kings must tamely sacrifice their 'inclinations, to the creatures they 'were born to command! Shall I give 'up such beauty as that of Almena! 'a beauty that has smitten my heart, 'and inspired me with such tenderness of affection as I never yet felt 'for woman!—But Almena was Solyman's!—It might be so; but she is 'now mine. Possession goes from one 'to another, according to the laws of 'nations; and, by those laws, Almena 'is mine.

'Why then do I feel these uneasy 'sensations, as much at the thoughts 'of keeping, as of parting with her! 'the laws of nature, the unvariable 'laws of nature and truth create them. 'The laws of nations ought always to 'be founded on these; and these suggest to me, that to keep Almena, 'would be most injurious and inhuman. 'Shall I, who have condemned that 'in another, as a crime which deserved 'the punishment of death, commit the 'very same myself! what a detestable 'hypocrite should I appear! Shall I, 'who promised the lover that none of 'my officers should deprive him of 'Almena; shall I degrade the king, 'by doing what I would have punished in a subject? I love Almena, and 'should be exquisitely happy in the 'enjoyment of her; but shall I, therefore, make her miserable! How should 'I ever partake of happiness, if the 'object of my affections lived with me 'in sullen discontent, or inconsolable 'sorrow? Base and unworthy of the 'heart of man, must be that love, which 'would purchase it's gratification by 'the misery of it's object! The heart 'of Almena is Solyman's, and so shall 'be her person: painful is the alternative; but truth, and honour, and 'virtue, must prevail!'

Thus the generous king of Kanara overcame the efforts of importunate desire, by the force of virtue and reason; and nobly scorned to avail himself of his power against an unhappy man, who had been long persecuted by misfortune, and distressed in his love.

The hour came at which he had ordered Solyman to attend him. The king received him with a condescending smile; and without the least appearance of uneasiness or dissatisfaction in his countenance, desired him not to be apprehensive about Almena, for that he

ſhould ſhortly be put in poſſeſſion of her.

Having thus ſpoken, he went immediately to her apartment, and gently taking her hand, 'Moſt beautiful of the 'daughters of India,' ſaid he, 'ceaſe 'your ſorrows! I am not now come 'to offer you my love; but to recommend to you another lover, who poſſibly may be happier in your favour 'than I could ever hope to be: he is 'now in the palace; and if you will 'give me leave, I will introduce him 'to you.'—'My heart,' ſaid Almena, 'has been ſo much accuſtomed to new 'diſtreſſes, that it is not now ſhocked 'by their frequency: but if you have 'any pity for me, ſuffer me to bewail 'my miſeries in ſolitude. Not to be 'interrupted in my ſorrows, is all I 'aſk; and that is not, ſurely, too much 'for you to grant.' The king anſwered with a ſmile, 'If I am not to be 'happy in your love, I am determined 'that none but the perſon whom I am 'about to introduce to you, ſhall be 'ſo;' and haſtily quitting the apartment, he returned with Solyman.

The lovers flew to each other's arms; 'My Solyman!'—'My Almena!' In a few moments being recollected, they threw themſelves at the feet of the king; and Solyman, as well as the tranſports of his heart would give him leave, expreſſed his gratitude: 'Generous 'prince,' ſaid he, 'the thanks of Solyman are not worth your acceptance. 'But you will not be without a reward: 'yours ſhall be the ſupreme pleaſure 'of conſcious goodneſs; yours ſhall 'be the care of the Eternal Providence, 'and the prayers and bleſſings of Solyman and Almena!'

In the gratitude of his heart, Solyman offered the king his aſſiſtance in the proſecution of the war with the Sundians: but he humanely refuſed his offer; telling him, that love and war were no allies; that his ſufferings had already been too many and too great; and that neither he ſhould be expoſed to danger, nor Almena to fear, on his account. He moreover told them, that if they were inclined to return by ſea to the valley of Irwan, they ſhould be attended by an armed veſſel, to ſecure them from the aſſaults of an enemy. But this obliging offer they declined: Solyman was unwilling any more to riſque that which was dearer than life; and Almena yet trembled at the thoughts of the Sundian pirate. They, therefore, notwithſtanding the length and tedioufneſs of the way, determined to go by land; and having taken leave of the king, who ſupplied them with every neceſſary, and lent them his own beaſts and attendants, they ſet their faces towards Dehli.

CHAP. XXIV.

THEIR road was through a mountainous country, troubleſome to the traveller; little cultivated by the labours, or enlivened by the habitations of men. But what are the difficulties which love and hope cannot ſurmount! they deſpiſe the threats of danger, and the toils of labour; and proceed with reſolution through thoſe perplexities, which by other eyes are beheld with deſpair. The travellers, thus animated, and looking forward to thoſe delightful ſcenes of reſt, thoſe days of rural eaſe and happineſs which they ſhould enjoy in the valley of Irwan, paſſed over the rugged mountains that oppoſed their way, without the leaſt ſenſe of wearineſs or fear.

After travelling many days, without any accident or delay, more than the neceſſary refreſhment of nature required, they arrived at Dehli. At the ſight of her native place, Almena ſhed a tear of joy, and the lovers embraced each other with more than common tenderneſs: ſo much is there in the power of external circumſtances, to improve and exalt the pleaſures of the mind. Almena always loved her Solyman with the moſt tender affection; but ſhe loved him at Dehli, more than in any other place: delight is inſeparable from the idea of thoſe ſcenes, where we have paſſed the happy hours of childhood; and though, when in the maturity of life we reviſit our native countries, we cannot enjoy that innocent thoughtleſs chearfulneſs, of which we ſtill retain ſome notion; yet we are delighted with the remembrance of it, and thoſe ſcenes are always dear to us.

Almena forgot not to viſit her village, and the people whom ſhe called her own. The poor inhabitants, at the ſight of their benefactreſs, wept with pleaſure;

pleaſure; and ſhe did not leave them, without giving them new exhortations to their duty, and new inſtances of her beneficence. Indeed, in all generous acts ſhe now doubled her aſſiduities; for ſhe concluded, that, on account of her great and ſingular obligations to Providence, ſhe ought in gratitude to have a ſuperior portion of virtue.

After a ſhort ſtay at Dehli, Solyman and Almena renewed their journey, and ſet forward to Iſpahan. This rout was longer; but it was more eaſy, and leſs expoſed to robbers, than that which led to the Perſian Gulph. When they arrived at Iſpahan, Solyman had the pleaſure to find his friend the merchant, who was ſtill detained by buſineſs in that city. He eaſily made his apology for not accepting, as he had propoſed, his kind offer of a paſſage into Europe, by introducing him to Almena. He related to him their various intereſting adventures, to which he liſtened with the eager curioſity and concern of a friend, acknowledging all along the hand of Providence in their preſervation. For the amiable and accompliſhed Almena, he felt great eſteem: her pathetic deſcriptions, and her juſt and natural obſervations, were extremely entertaining and affecting. But he was moſt charmed with the character of the King of Kanara; and requeſted Almena to relate every particular of his behaviour.

'When I firſt beheld him,' ſaid ſhe, 'I perceived in his countenance a noble affability and openneſs, which ſeemed to ſpeak a great and generous mind. This gave me ſome pleaſure; as I might have hopes from his compaſſion, ſhould it be my fate to be ſelected by him: ſuch, you know, it was. When I was conducted into an apartment of the palace, he waited on me with the moſt affable politeneſs; and ſeeing me in tears, he gently took my hand, and ſpoke to the following effect: "Be not diſtreſſed, fair Almena! Though you are in the power of a prince, you are not in the hands of a tyrant. If time and the aſſiduities of tenderneſs may prevail on you to return my love, I ſhall be happy; if not, you ſhall never be made miſerable by cruelty or by violence." Conſiſtent with this declaration, was his whole conduct to me, during the time I was in his poſſeſſion. How I regained my liberty, you have already heard.'

'To the character which you have already received of the Kanarian prince,' ſaid Solyman to the merchant, 'I will add a poetical portrait, which poſſibly may not be diſagreeable to you: my gratitude for his favours, and my admiration of his virtues, induced me to attempt it.'

THE AMIABLE KING.

THE freeborn muſe her tribute rarely brings,
Or burns her incenſe to the power of kings:
But virtue ever ſhall her voice command,
Alike a ſpade or ſceptre in her hand.
Is there a prince untainted with a throne,
That makes the intereſt of mankind his own;
Whoſe bounty knows no bounds of time or place;
Who nobly feels for all the human race:
A prince, that acts in reaſon's ſteady ſphere,
No ſlave to paſſion, and no dupe to fear;
A breaſt, where mild humanity reſides,
Where virtue dictates, and where wiſdom guides;
A mind, that ſtretch'd beyond the years of youth,
Explores the ſecret ſprings of taſte and truth.
Theſe, theſe are virtues, which the muſe ſhall ſing;
And plant, for theſe, her laurels round a king!
Kanara's monarch! this ſhall be thy praiſe:
For this, be crown'd with never-fading bays!

'Your verſes,' ſaid the merchant, 'are very agreeable to me: for they are juſtly applicable to a prince whom every merchant in Great Britain has the greateſt reaſon to reſpect; and who is beloved by his ſubjects, as much as a father by his children: He too is young, as is the king of Kanara. But I have lately had the pleaſure to hear of his marriage: and at the ſame time I received, from a literary correſpondent, an ode on the occaſion; which, as you have a poetical taſte, I ſhall make no ſcruple to offer you.'

HYMENEAL.

I.

AWAKE, thou everlaſting lyre!
That once the mighty Pindar ſtrung,
When, rapt with more than mortal fire,
The gods of Greece he ſung:
Awake!
Arreſt the rapid foot of time again,
With liquid notes of joy, and pleaſure's melting ſtrain.

II.

Crown'd with each beauteous flower that blows
On Acidalia's tuneful ſide;
With all Aonia's roſy pride,
Where numerous Aganippe flows;
From Theſpain groves and fountains wild,
Come, thou yellow-veſted boy,
Redolent of youth and joy,
* Fair Urania's favourite child!
George to thee devotes the day:
Io Hymen! haſte away!

III.

Daughter of the genial main!
Queen of youth and roſy ſmiles,
Queen of dimple-dwelling wiles;
Come, with all thy Paphian train!
O give the fair that blooms for Britain's throne,
Thy melting charms of love, thy ſoul-enchanting zone!

IV.

Daughter of the genial main!
Bring that heart-diſſolving power,
Which once in Ida's ſacred bower
The ſoul of Jove oppos'd in vain:
The fire of gods thy conquering charms confeſt;
And vanquiſh'd ſunk, ſunk down on Juno's foſtering breaſt.

V.

She comes! The conſcious ſea ſubſides;
Old ocean curbs his thund'ring tides;
Smooth the ſilken ſurface lies,
Where Venus' flowery chariot ſlies:
Paphian airs in ambuſh ſleep
On the ſtill boſom of the deep;
Paphian maids around her move,
Keen-eyed hope, and joy, and love;
Their roſy breaſts a thouſand Cupids lave;
And dip their wanton wings, and beat the buxom wave.

VI.

But mark, of more than vulgar mien,
With regal grace, and radiant eye,
A form in youthful majeſty!
Britain, hail thy favour'd queen!
For her, the conſcious ſea ſubſides;
Old ocean curbs his thund'ring tides:
O'er the glaſſy-boſom'd main,
Venus leads her laughing train;
The Paphian maids move graceful by her ſide;
And, o'er the buxom waves, the roſy Cupids ride.

VII.

Fly, ye fairy-footed hours!
Fly, with aromatic flowers!
Such as bath'd in orient dews,
Beauty's living glow diffuſe;
Such as in Idalia's grove
Breathe the ſweets, the ſoul of love!

VIII.

Come, genial god of chaſte delight,
With wreaths of feſtive roſes crown'd,
And torch that burns with radiance bright,
And liberal robe that ſweeps the ground!
Bring thy days of golden joy,
Pleaſures pure that never cloy!
Bring to Britain's happy pair,
All that's kind, and good, and fair!
George to thee devotes the day:
Io Hymen! haſte away!

IX.

Daughters of Jove! ye virgins ſage,
That wait on Camus' hoary age;
That oft his winding vales along
Have ſmooth'd your ſilver-woven ſong;
O wake once more thoſe lays ſublime,
That live beyond the wrecks of time!
To crown your Albion's boaſted pair,
The never-fading wreath prepare;
While her rocks echo to this grateful ſtrain,
'The friends of Freedom and of Britain reign!'

'The ode you have obliged me with,' ſaid Solyman, 'though I do not very 'well underſtand it, gives me ſome 'idea of the enthuſiaſm and harmony 'of the Engliſh poetry. But I am 'leſs pleaſed with the productions of 'art in your country, than with the 'affectionate duty which the people 'ſhew to their king: for that is the 'baſis of civil happineſs; and indeed every humane prince, who has 'the intereſt of his ſubjects at heart, 'will always reign in their affections.

'But now, my friend, if you are 'not too much taken up with your 'concerns at Iſpahan, will you be prevailed on to viſit the valley of Irwan? 'As you are a lover of nature, and of 'the muſes, you will there meet with 'much to entertain you; at leaſt, you

* See Catullus.

'will

'will find a retreat from the fatigues 'of buſineſs, and the plagues of popu- 'larity. Almena too joins in this re- 'queſt, and will be glad of ſo enter- 'taining a friend in the firſt ſtages of 'her retirement.'

The merchant accepted the invitation, and they left Iſpahan the following day. He was deſirous to hear from Almena the ſtory of her captivity, and took the firſt opportunity to requeſt it: 'I have heard,' ſaid he, 'from Soly- 'man, the greateſt part of your ad- 'ventures; but I have not been in- 'formed how you paſſed that unhappy 'period of time, from your being taken 'by the Sundians, to your departure 'from the caſtle at Sevaſir.'

'You call back memory, Sir,' ſaid Almena, 'to the days of miſery: but 'as I can, at this diſtance, look upon 'them without terror, I will endea- 'vour to deſcribe them to you.

'When I was firſt taken by the Sun- 'dians, my diſtraction was ſo great, 'that I retain no idea of what paſſed, 'till the captain of the veſſel conveyed 'me on ſhore to the caſtle of Sevaſir, 'and preſented me, terrified and almoſt 'frantic as I was, to the deteſted go- 'vernor; who, as I have been ſince 'informed, received ſuch kind of ac- 'knowledgments from the ſeamen, for 'protecting them in their illegal and 'piratical captures.

'The wretch, as well as I remem- 'ber, ſeemed totally inſenſible to my 'miſery; and, with a ſmile upon his 'countenance, ordered his domeſticks 'to convey me to my apartments. 'Theſe, indeed, wanted neither ele- 'gance nor convenience; but I de- 'ſpiſed the one, and neglected the 'other. The firſt evening I paſſed in 'the moſt painful anguiſh for the 'loſs of Solyman, and the moſt dread- 'ful apprehenſions of injurious treat- 'ment from the governor. The women 'that were about me, ſeemed the 'wretched remains of ruined inno- 'cence, who had firſt been victims to 'the deſires of the tyrant, and after- 'wards made his ſlaves. Dreadful 'was the ſcene I had before me! Some 'of theſe unhappy creatures ſeemed to 'pity me, and to be concerned for 'my approaching misfortunes; while 'others, who with their virtue had loſt 'their humanity, looked upon me 'with a careleſs ſcorn; pleaſed, I fear, 'with the thought, that they ſhould 'ſee one woman more, as miſerable 'and as deſpicable as themſelves.

'Early the next morning, the go- 'vernor came into my apartment; and 'caſting his eyes upon the bed, on 'which I had not repoſed, "It ſeems, "Madam," ſaid he, with a ſcornful 'ſmile, "that you approve not of "your lodgings; but a little time, it "is to be preſumed, will reconcile you "to us." Theſe morning viſits he 'conſtantly paid me; and as he always 'found me in ſullen ſorrow, he be- 'haved much in the ſame manner. At 'laſt, he changed his addreſs; ſeemed 'to pity me; aſked me for the ſtory of 'my misfortunes; and, I believe, wept 'when he heard it: but as I was aware 'of the hypocrite, I was equally re- 'gardleſs of his pity, as I had been 'of his ſcorn; and ſtill continued to 'look upon him, with the ſame for- 'bidding averſion and diſdain.

'Thus paſſed my days in this con- 'finement; but they would have been 'more intolerable, had I not found a 'harp in my apartments, which pro- 'bably had been left there by ſome 'unhappy lady, who had poſſeſſed them 'before me. With this inſtrument I 'amuſed myſelf for many a melan- 'choly hour, which muſt otherwiſe 'have paſſed away in the moſt miſe- 'rable languor. I alſo compoſed a 'ſong, ſuitable to my ſtate of mind 'and misfortune; which I adapted to 'my harp, and which, I think, was 'as follows:

SONG.

I.

'TIS o'er—the pleaſing proſpect's o'er!
My weary heart can hope no more;
Then welcome, wan deſpair!
Approach with all thy dreadful train;
Wild anguiſh, diſcontent, and pain,
And thorny-pillow'd care!

II.

Gay hope, and eaſe, and joy, and reſt,
All, all that charms the peaceful breaſt,
For ever I reſign:
Let pale anxiety, inſtead,
That has not where to lay her head,
And laſting woe be mine.

III.

It comes! I feel the painful woe;
My eyes, for Solyman, will flow

In

In silent grief again;
Who wand'ring o'er some mountain drear,
Now haply sheds the pensive tear,
And calls on me in vain.

IV.

Perhaps, along the lonely shores,
He now the sea's blue breast explores,
To watch the distant sail:
Perhaps, on Sundah's hills forlorn,
He faints, with aching toil o'erborne;
And life's last spirits fail.

V.

Ah! no—the cruel thought forbear!
Avaunt, thou fiend of fell despair,
That only death canst give!
While Heaven eternal rules above,
Almena yet may find her love,
And Solyman may live!

'Such, Sir, was my life in the castle 'of Sevasir; which passed like the wa- 'ters of Zenderoud, that in some 'places are tortured by rocks and pre- 'cipices, and in others languish in dull 'stagnation.'

CHAP. XXV.

THE travellers had now proceeded on their way to the valley of Irwan, as far as the village of Abdat; where Solyman proposed that they should visit the lovers who owed their preservation to him. Of this he was the more desirous, as he had never seen them, since he had first recommended them to the protection of his father; but the pleasure he proposed to himself from this visit, arose not from a desire of being flattered with their acknowledgments, but of beholding and enjoying their happiness.

The lovers received their benefactor, with the greatest ardour of gratitude; but at the same time with that delicacy, which proved it to be sincere: they were not loud in their acknowledgments, nor officious in their compliments; but yet their attention to their guests, shewed how much they were delighted with this opportunity of expressing their respect for Solyman. The travellers, in the mean time, were not less pleased to behold the peculiar happiness of the lovers, who seemed to have but one heart, and one inclination. Solyman and Almena beheld, in them, a picture of themselves; and felt more sensibly their own felicity, when they had before them so pleasing an image of it.

The merchant too was delighted with this scene of conjugal happiness. 'Such,' said he to Solyman, 'are the 'genuine fruits of those alliances, 'which are made by love. When I 'behold them, I blush for myself and 'for my countrymen; for love, ge- 'nuine love, as if it were no longer 'a passion essential to human nature, 'is looked upon as an Utopian idea, 'existing only in the imagination of 'poets and enthusiasts: hence, every 'tendency to it is ridiculed as romantic, 'and modern marriages are only con- 'tracts of convenience. A British lady 'is exposed to sale; and if she has a 'good person, as well as an ample for- 'tune, she hopes by that addition only 'to fetch a higher price, and make a 'better market. This, however, it 'must be owned, is not the foible of 'the women only; the men are equal- 'ly, if not more mercenary; and have, 'if possible, more selfish views in their 'marriages: so that, in this case, cun- 'ning is only opposed to cunning. 'All this proceeds from that mischie- 'vous opinion, which measures happi- 'ness by the possessions of fortune. 'Hence, that mutual coldness and in- 'difference, which both experience be- 'fore the marriage torch is extinct; 'from new acquisitions of wealth, each 'expects new degrees of felicity, and 'both are disappointed; when they 'find themselves mistaken, destitute of 'that affectionate tenderness which en- 'dears the married state, they look up- 'on each other as the cause of dis- 'content, and disgust and aversion 'succeed. Thus, they sacrifice to va- 'nity, and reap the fruits of it!'

From the village of Abdat, Solyman and Almena, with their friend the merchant, proceeded to the valley of Irwan, where they found the aged Ardavan still living, and enjoying all the faculties of nature. The benevolent sage rejoiced to receive his son, not only safe from the dangers of travel, but happy in the enjoyment of his love; and with a heart full of tenderness, he thus conferred on both, his paternal benediction:

'Children of the heart, and comfort 'of the years of Ardavan! Solyman 'shall be as the sun, when he cometh 'from the chambers of the east, when

'he

he ſpreadeth his glories over the waves of Ganges: my ſon ſhall be as the Euphrates, the river of plenty, whoſe waves are the delight of a thouſand meadows; he ſhall be like the roe upon the mountains, that danceth in the vigour of his heart, and ſaith to the fence of the huſbandman, What art thou? His head ſhall be crowned with the rays of Mithra; becauſe his heart melted with compaſſion, and becauſe his hand was ſtretched forth to relieve the children of affliction!

'Almena is fairer than the women of the eaſt; ſhe is more virtuous than the daughters of men: love dwelleth in her heart, and benevolence ſitteth in her eye. She ſhall be like the tree that droppeth balm upon the flowers of Irwan; as the ſtar of the evening reflected from the river. Her countenance ſhall be pleaſant as the calm ſurface of the ocean, when the gilded clouds of evening blaze upon it's boſom: ſhe ſhall be as the moon, when ſhe lendeth her rays to the traveller, and ſheddeth a mild light over the groves and vallies. Her voice ſhall be as the voice of the turtle, calling to her mate in the thickets of the foreſt. Like the ſtars that ſurround the chariot of the moon, ſhall be the children of Almena; beautiful as the plants of the cedar, and ſprightly as the fawns upon the mountains!'

Thus bleſſed by the voice of Ardavan, and happy in themſelves, the virtuous Solyman and Almena live in the valley of Irwan! Each day is endeared by the delights of tender love; and the remembrance of paſt diſtreſſes is attended only with the pleaſing ſenſations of gratitude to that Being, whoſe providence is over all his works.

HYMN TO THE ETERNAL PROVIDENCE.

I.

LIFE of the world, immortal mind!
Father of all the human kind,
Whoſe boundleſs eye that knows no reſt,
Intent on nature's ample breaſt,
Explores the ſpace of earth and ſkies,
And ſees eternal incenſe riſe!
To thee, my humble voice I raiſe:
Forgive, while I preſume to praiſe.

II.

Though ſhort the life thy goodneſs gave,
And ſoon deſcending to the grave;
Yet 'twas thy bounty, ſtill to give
A being that can think and live;
In all thy works thy wiſdom ſee,
And ſtretch it's tow'ring mind to thee!
To thee, my humble voice I raiſe:
Forgive, while I preſume to praiſe.

III.

And ſtill this poor contracted ſpan,
This life, that bears the name of man;
From thee derives it's vital ray,
Eternal ſource of life and day!
Thy bounty ſtill the ſunſhine pours,
That gilds it's morn and evening hours.
To thee, my humble voice I raiſe:
Forgive, while I preſume to praiſe.

IV.

Through error's maze, through folly's night,
The lamp of reaſon lends me light.
When ſtern affliction waves her rod,
My heart confides in thee, my God!
When nature ſhrinks, oppreſs'd with woes;
E'en then ſhe finds in thee repoſe.
To thee, my humble voice I raiſe:
Forgive, while I preſume to praiſe.

V.

Affliction flies, and hope returns;
Her lamp with brighter ſplendor burns.
Gay love with all his ſmiling train,
And peace and joy are here again.
Theſe, theſe, I know, 'twas thine to give:
I truſted; and, behold! I live.
To thee, my humble voice I raiſe:
Forgive, while I preſume to praiſe.

VI.

O may I ſtill thy favour prove!
Still grant me gratitude and love.
Let truth and virtue guide my heart;
Nor peace, nor hope, nor joy depart.
But yet, whate'er my life may be,
My heart ſhall ſtill repoſe on thee!
To thee, my humble voice I raiſe:
Forgive, while I preſume to praiſe!

FINIS.

BRITISH
10 NOV 1900
MUSEUM